

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 delivery of the COVID-19 Mid-Term Recovery Plan, highlighting the Council's progress and achievements in responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic between September 2021 and March 2022.
- 1.2 To seek confirmation that the recovery period has now reached a natural conclusion and the Mid-Term Recovery Plan can be ended.
- 1.3 As national legal restrictions have come to an end, our efforts to keep people safe from COVID-19 and continue the local recovery will form part of business-as-usual activity and will be guided by the new Council Plan 2022-25.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Since the last update to Cabinet on the COVID-19 Mid-Term Recovery Plan in September 2021, the Government published its 'COVID-19 Response: Autumn and Winter Plan', setting out a comprehensive plan for managing the virus over the colder months. Plan A for England relied on booster vaccinations, testing and isolation, guidance on safer behaviours and measures at the border. The publication also outlined a Plan B which could be deployed later in the winter if the situation deteriorated. The measures in Plan B – mandatory face coverings, working from home guidance and COVID-19 certification – were designed to reduce transmission while minimising economic and social impacts.
- 2.2 From September to November 2021, the Government:
 - Extended the vaccine programme to children aged between 12 and 15 and started the booster campaign for those 50 and over and in high-risk groups.

- Maintained a lower level of restrictions than most European comparator countries.
- Managed relatively high levels of Delta infections without placing the NHS at risk of unsustainable pressures.

2.3 On 24 November 2021, scientists in South Africa reported a new variant, subsequently named the Omicron variant. The UK was one of the first countries to respond, initially through travel restrictions, then through accelerating and extending the COVID-19 vaccine booster campaign. The Government was able to implement Plan B measures in England at short notice as a result of the plans developed for managing the virus over the autumn and winter period. Plan B measures came into force in England on the 10 December 2021.

2.4 Although the Omicron variant drove prevalence of the virus to an unprecedented high, adherence to Plan B, high vaccine protection in the population, and a decrease in severity found in the Omicron variant, kept hospitalisation rates lower than in previous waves. This resulted in the Government taking the decision to revert to Plan A from 27 January 2022.

2.5 On 21 February 2022, the government published their 'Living with COVID-19' plan which removed the remaining legal restrictions while continuing to protect people most vulnerable to the virus and maintaining resilience. The Government's ongoing response is structured around 4 key principles:

- Living with COVID-19: removing domestic restrictions while encouraging safer behaviours.
- Protecting people most vulnerable to COVID-19: including deploying targeted testing
- Maintaining resilience: ongoing surveillance, contingency planning, and the ability to reintroduce key capabilities such as mass vaccination and testing in an emergency.
- Securing innovations and opportunities.

2.6 Key changes and implementation dates included:

From 21 February:

- Removal of the guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice weekly asymptomatic testing.

From 24 February:

- Removal of the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test; people testing positive will be advised to isolate.
- Fully vaccinated close contacts and people aged under 18 were no longer required to test or isolate.
- End of self-isolation support and routine contact tracing.
- End of legal requirement for employees to inform their employers about positive tests.

From 24 March:

- Removal of COVID-19 provisions within statutory sick pay.

From 1 April:

- No provision for free universal symptomatic and asymptomatic testing for the general public in England (testing will still be available for high-risk groups and social care staff).
- Removal of the current guidance on voluntary Covid-status certification and COVID-19 passports.
- The Government will update guidance setting out the ongoing steps that people with COVID-19 should take to minimise contact with other people.

From 1st April (workplace specific):

- Guidance to the public and to businesses will be consolidated in line with public health advice.
- Removal of the health and safety requirement for every employer to explicitly consider COVID-19 in their risk assessments (employers should continue to consider the needs of vulnerable employees).
- The existing set of 'working safely' guidance will be replaced with new public health guidance.

2.7 During the past 6 months the Council has continue to apply the principles of the COVID-19 Mid-Term Recovery Plan in its response and recover in line with the national guidance above. Appendix 1 provides an update against the Plan, highlighting the Council's progress and key achievements in responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the last report to Cabinet in September 2021, key highlights include:

- Development of the local 'Living with Covid Framework' which sets out the workspace offer to our workforce depending on the current COVID-19 risk level and its impact on workforce resilience.
- Saw 122,540 vaccine doses administered locally - 9,354 1st dose, 12,740 2nd dose and 100,446 booster vaccines. 61% of 12–15-year-olds have now received their first Covid vaccine.

- Continued to run outreach sessions to increase vaccine take up in traditionally hard-to-reach groups.
- North Lincolnshire's integrated approach to the Community Testing Programme, Contact Tracing and Vaccination Outreach has been recognised by the UK Health Security Agency as exceptional.
- Launched public-facing 'North Lincolnshire Covid-19 Daily Report' on the Council website, enabling people to see if rates of infection are high in their area or in an age group that they mix with.
- Launched various initiatives to support recruitment and retention in the care sector, including the 'Proud to Care' campaign, the development of a 'Proud to Care Recruitment Hub' and a paid 'Introduction to Care' training programme.
- Continued to offer a hybrid approach to engaging with children and families (while maintaining our statutory responsibilities) including face to face and virtual mechanisms, to best meet their needs and circumstances.
- Delivered 5 units of accommodation for rough sleepers, with a further 4 units of accommodation due to be completed in 2022-23.
- Saw 4 projects awarded a total of £1.3m from the Community Resilience Fund to help boost local skills and growth.
- Delivered £0.9m of Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grants (OHLG) to 290 eligible businesses, while continuing to distribute Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding.
- The 18-24 Youth Hub engaged with 46 young people since the start of December 2021, of which 85% have gone into work. The Youth Hub has contributed, along with Kickstart, to reducing youth unemployment in North Lincolnshire from 12.7% before the pandemic to 3.4% in February 2022.
- COVID-19 Local Support Grant Funding provided food vouchers for a range of groups (including care leavers and families in low-income households with pre-school children) over the Christmas holidays. These will also be provided for the upcoming Easter break.

2.8 The Council will continue to monitor local COVID-19 data and respond to any further national policy changes as they arise. The local 'Living with Covid Framework' remains in use to keep the Council workforce safe and well, keep local resilience at a generally manageable level and ensure that COVID-19 positive cases among staff remain low.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 Cabinet is invited to note the progress made in responding to and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic between September 2021 and March 2022. In line with the national policy direction and removal of legal restrictions, it is proposed that the COVID-19 Mid-Term Recovery Plan is brought to a close and our future efforts to keep people safe from

COVID-19 and continue the local recovery will form part of business-as-usual activity. This will be guided by the Council Plan 2022-25.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The national COVID-19 response and associated roadmap have provided specific milestones for the local return to normality. As in our previous response to the easing of restrictions, all information about future changes will be communicated to relevant stakeholders while public updates will be provided through the Council's website and other media channels.

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 pandemic 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 changes to national guidelines.

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 recovery and renewal efforts.

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 endorse the decision that the COVID-19 Mid-Term Recovery Plan is brought to a close and that going forward, the Council's COVID-19 protection efforts will be integrated into regular business-as-usual activity.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITIES

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Date: 17th March 2021

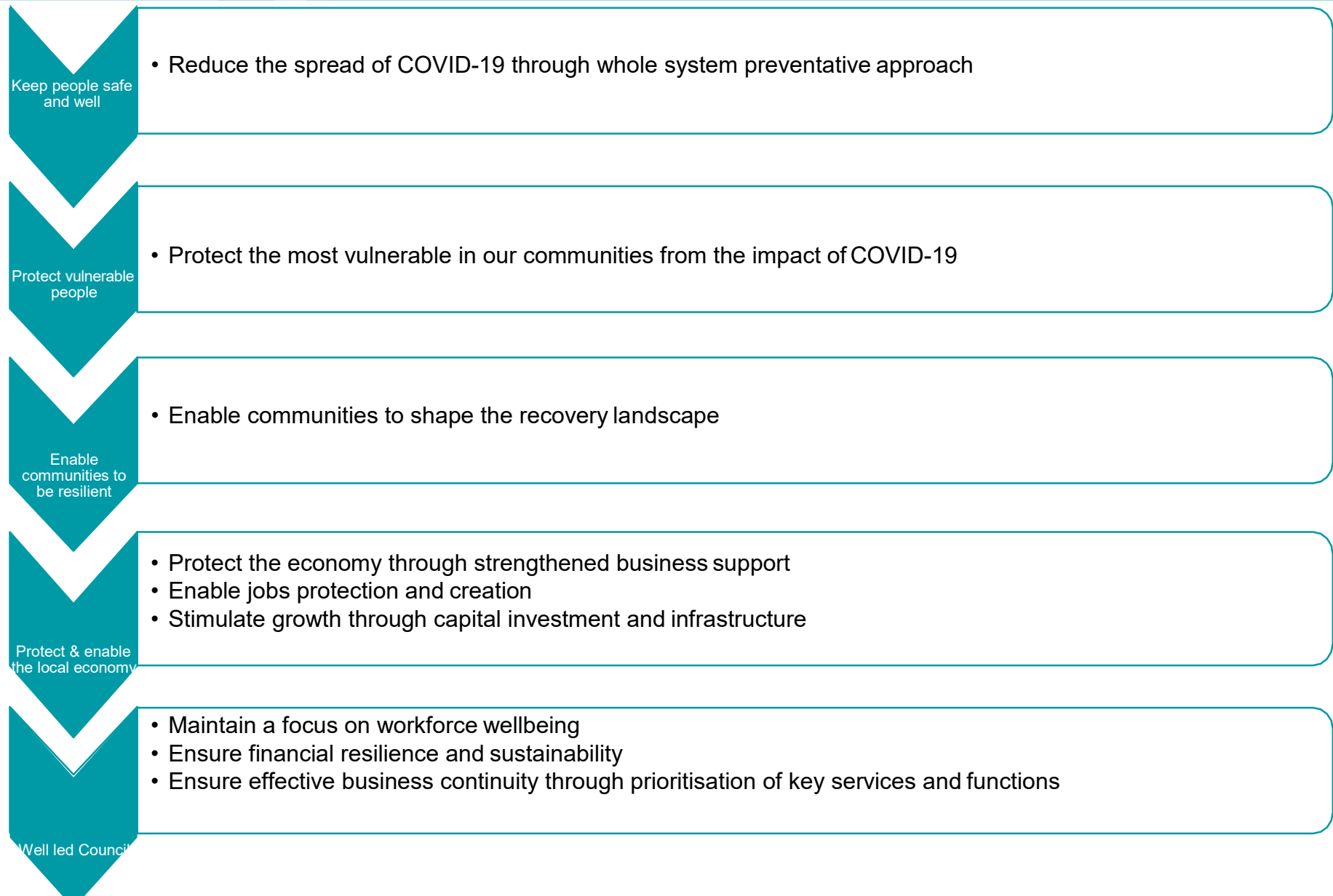
NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COVID-19 MID-TERM RECOVERY PLAN

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS (March 2022)

**North
Lincolnshire
Council**

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Enhance digital technologies in order to deliver our council priorities



Value added through partnerships

- While the Omicron variant drove prevalence of the virus to an unprecedented high and saw Plan B measures entering into force on 10th December 2021, high vaccine protection in the population and a decrease in severity found in the Omicron variant kept hospitalisation rates lower than in previous waves. As a result, the Government took the decision to revert to Plan A from 27th January 2022, followed by the publication of the national ‘Living with COVID-19 Plan’ on 21st February. This signalled the gradual removal of the remaining legal restrictions while protecting people most vulnerable to Covid-19 and maintaining resilience.
- Over this period, the council has continued to reflect and promote key advice and guidance, kept services running and adapting to the changing environment, continued to lead the prevention and management of local outbreaks, worked with businesses to drive economic recovery and growth and worked in partnership with NHS to enable the successful continuation of the vaccination programme.

Priority	Overview of progress
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Keeping People Safe and Well: **Reduce the spread**

- Safe working practices**
- Developed the NLC Living with Covid Framework which sets out the workspace offer to our workforce depending on the current local COVID risk level and its impact on our workforce resilience. The current risk level is determined by considering a number of indicators and intelligence sources and how they interact with each other. The framework has enabled us to keep our workforce safe and well, kept workforce resilience and business continuity at a generally manageable level and ensured that COVID positive cases were low in the workforce, even during the increase in cases driven by the Omicron variant.
 - Made updates and revisions to local procedures to reflect latest national guidance, including changes brought about by the Omicron variant (Dec 2021), Plan B restrictions (Jan 2022), easing of self-isolation requirements (Jan 2022) and return to Plan A (Feb 2022).
 - A further round of wellbeing conversations between employees and managers took place between December 2021 and February 2022 to ensure the workforce remained safe and well. They presented an opportunity to identify any additional support required, particularly through Plan B restrictions and the withdrawal of connectivity and in-person contact in some areas.
 - Recording and reporting of workforce availability continued, in order to provide ongoing insight into the impact of COVID-19 on the workforce and to assist business continuity. This was scaled up and down as required through the Delta and Omicron wave and increase in local case rates.
- Outbreak management**
- Management and prevention of outbreaks has continued to be a priority focus area. Schools, care homes and high-risk business have responded well to identification, control and mitigation of outbreaks across the settings.
 - In schools, the number of pupils and staff members testing positive has significantly decreased since January 2022 and there was not a spike in cases following schools reopening after half term. The public health team continues to work with schools around infection prevention control, but demand for support has decreased with the reduction in cases.
 - The test and trace data sources used to proactively respond to outbreaks in workplaces have ceased due to that element of work being discontinued. However, the public health team continue to receive reports from some businesses directly. In line with falling Covid rates, cases within businesses have also continued to decline. We are continuing to liaise with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to monitor possible local outbreaks. The statutory responsibility and funding for this are now with UKHSA.
 - The Care Home Oversight group continues to meet with partners and providers to ensure any new guidance is implemented and maintain oversight

of outbreaks. Care home closures due to COVID-19 outbreaks continue to impact on the availability of care home placements.

- A designated setting has remained operational to support hospital discharge and reduce the spread of infection.

Safe places and enforcement

- When national restrictions were still in force, public protection continued to undertake assessments and enforce regulations as appropriate, in partnership with Humberside Police. Throughout each phase of national restrictions, community facilities were also continually assessed for COVID-19 security.
- Frontline buildings, including St John's Market, Waters' Edge Business and Visitor Centre and the Brigg Business and Tourism Centre have continued to follow government and council guidance and ensured that tenants, traders and the general public have remained safe and well.
- 9 LED screens were installed in Scunthorpe Town centre to present important public health messages and more.
- A new 'North Lincolnshire COVID-19 daily report' tool was launched which collects data from the Government, NHS and local sources to give a clear picture of the virus in North Lincolnshire. People can see if rates of infection are high in their area or in an age group that they mix with.
- The Council has continued to work with NLAG and the CCG to resolve issues and provide mutual aid to assist the flow of people through the hospitals.

Test, Trace, Self-Isolate

- Provided information, advice and guidance for all citizens and workers to access the national schemes for lateral flow testing, including providing community testing facilities. Community assisted testing sites are available to all residents and workers of North Lincolnshire until 31st March.
- From 24 February, contacts of Covid-positive cases were no longer required to self-isolate or advised to take daily tests. In view of this, local contact tracing provision has been stood down, but can be reactivated if required. Collection of lateral flow test kits remain for a period of time in 17 venues. Lateral flow tests will no longer be free, except for certain vulnerable groups of people.
- Financial support to help eligible people to self-isolate continued until February 2022.
- For social care and health, the requirements for testing and self-isolation in relation to Covid-19 remain in place.

Priority	Overview of progress
Protect vulnerable people	<p>Vaccinations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through effective local planning and delivery of the national COVID-19 vaccination programme, we have ensured that citizens (particularly those from traditionally hard to reach groups) have been engaged with the programme through its successive phases. Working with a cross-sector partnership, we have maximised vaccine uptake, making a massive contribution to keeping people safe and well and undoubtedly saving lives. • Since the start of September 2021, 122,540 vaccines have been administered locally (9,354 1st dose, 12,740 2nd dose and 100,446 booster vaccines) As of 10th March 2022, 84.7% of the population aged 12+ had received their first vaccine, 80.2% their 2nd vaccine and 64.5% their 3rd/booster vaccine. 61% of 12–15-year-olds have received their first Covid vaccine, this is above the average for the Humber, Coast & Vale Health and Care Partnership. • The Scunthorpe Vaccination Centres continue to offer booked and walk-in appointments and outreach sessions continue to take place 2 days a week. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At The Foundry, our pop-up walk-in vaccination clinics have administered over 2,800 vaccine doses since December 2021, ensuring people got their 1st, 2nd and booster doses. • At the Ironstone Centre, our Mass Vaccination centre has administered over 49,000 doses since August 2021. • At our outreach sessions, we have ensured those from traditionally hard to reach groups have been able to access their vaccine, administering over 3,500 vaccine doses in total. • Clinics continue within Primary Care Network sites, including for the vaccination of the clinically at risk 5-11 age cohort, and children within this age group who reside within a household where someone is immunosuppressed. We are continuing to plan for the next steps for the vaccination programme. • North Lincolnshire's integrated approach to the Community Testing Programme, Contact Tracing and Vaccination Outreach has been recognised by the UKHSA as exceptional. Council and North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group colleagues will be submitting a nomination for a national Health Service Journal (HSJ) award in connection with the vaccine programme. <p>Adult care sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation took place for the new legislative requirement that only those who were fully vaccinated or exempt for clinical reasons could work in Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulated care homes from 11 November 2021. A very small minority (6.4%) of health and care staff left the sector as a result of the vaccination requirement and wider pandemic pressures. However, following consultation, the government has revoked the COVID-19 vaccination requirements as a condition of employment in all health and social care settings. This came into force on 15 March 2022. • Since October 2021, grants to the value of £5m have been distributed across the care sector in relation to infection, prevention and control, rapid testing, Omicron and recruitment and retention. Recently, the grant applications for infection prevention control and workforce recruitment and retention have concluded. • Various initiatives have been undertaken to support recruitment and retention in the care sector, including:

- Launch of the Proud to Care campaign, development of a Proud to Care Recruitment Hub and a paid 'Introduction to Care' training programme.
- Distribution of a retention bonus (for CQC registered services)
- Wellbeing incentives for staff such as passes for Normanby Hall and leisure activities
- Opportunities for funded childcare for all care workers
- Grant funding for day activity services to enable people to access daily activities in a safe way
- Funded 'Skills for Care' membership for all registered managers to enable them to continue to support their workforce
- Development of 'CareFriends Recruitment and Retention' app
- Initiatives continue to make best use of the available workforce, including the provision of single handed care and R&R equipment and flexible use of current and additional workforce to meet the care needs of local people.
- PPE continues to be accessed via the portal for the care sector and training in PPE use has been provided and continues to be assessed.
- Adult social care regional meetings continue to be attended to collectively address national issues currently faced. Peer support has also been provided to neighbouring local authorities to support the development of similar initiatives that have been adopted by North Lincolnshire.

Children and Families

- COVID-19 Local Support Grant Funding provided food vouchers for a range of groups (including care leavers and families in low-income households with pre-school children) over the Christmas holidays. These will also be provided for the upcoming Easter break.
- Continue to have a strong position at the 'front door' of children's social care services in order to respond to changes in demand, and a focus across the partnership to enable families to receive the right help and support at the earliest point and at the lowest level.
- Continue to maximise resources across Children and Families to ensure children and families' needs are met and an ongoing focus on workforce development, recruitment and retention.
- Corporate parents remain committed to children in care and care leavers and as evidenced through the 2021 Corporate Parenting Week and ongoing activity. Children in care and care leavers continue to be supported and their achievements and successes are acknowledged and celebrated.
- Extended the care leavers financial policy so that all care leavers in the community, (16, 17 and 18+ years) have access to procured WIFI-MIFI devices in order to access the internet. This helps to reduce social isolation for our young people and enables them to remain connected to their support networks and their wider community, leading to more positive emotional wellbeing.
- We have listened to, taken account of and responded to the views and experiences of children and families who have experienced services; and there is an amplified focus on enhancing participation capacity and opportunities for people who have experienced services to shape and influence information, support and services.

- Continued to offer a hybrid approach to engaging with children and families (while maintaining our statutory responsibilities) including face to face and virtual mechanisms, to best meet their needs and circumstances.

Housing

- Continue to use the lessons learnt and new pathways developed during the pandemic to ensure any new rough sleepers are made an offer of temporary accommodation. We continue to offer targeted work with partners to ensure the sustainability of the tenancies we are creating for specific vulnerable groups.
- We have embedded and created a sustainable model with partners to generate a comprehensive package of support in the community and also ensure we move individuals through the system to ensure sufficiency of accommodation for future need.
- To increase local capacity, we now have 5 extra units of accommodation for rough sleepers delivered and managed by Framework, with a further 4 units of accommodation due to be completed in 2022-23.
- We are now seeing lower numbers of people presenting to the Housing Advice Team who state they are currently homeless. This instead is being replaced by a higher number of private renters who have been served notice as a result of the eviction ban being lifted on such accommodation by the Government. However, we are in a good position to assist, given that established pathways to ensure this cohort will be rehoused in a timely manner are already in place.

Schools

- Teams across Education and Inclusion resumed face-to-face work within schools and family homes, supporting schools with identifying those children and young people who may need additional support to return to school from COVID-19 and who may be experiencing anxiety and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Work continues to support schools to continue to reduce suspensions and persistent absence and to improve attendance.
- Short breaks for disabled children continue to be offered to families, with creative programmes aiming at increasing opportunity whilst decreasing risk.
- Continued targeted and bespoke support is matched to local need, and sector led peer approaches ensure that education settings are resilient and providing high quality provision across communities in North Lincolnshire.
- Regular (half termly) briefings for schools and early years settings keep the sector informed and connected

Enable resilient communities

- Community engagement is still active, especially in terms of testing and vaccinations, and Community Champions have worked well with the council to increase the reach of the vaccination programme. However, as cases have decreased there has been less demand for volunteer support and volunteers have started to support other non-Covid priorities. The Volunteer Hub continues to operate to signpost people who want to volunteer with any organisations that need volunteers.
- In May 2021, the Council submitted a package of eight projects to be assessed for for UK Community Resilience Funding (UK CRF). These projects were appraised and scored, with the result that four of the submitted projects were awarded a total of £1.3m of UK CRF in December 2021. The four projects will see new business incubator space created, training and development opportunities offered, support for people to build their confidence to get back into the jobs market and direct support for employers to shape skills training.
- Funding secured to develop two health and wellbeing studios (at the The Pods and Ancholme Leisure Centre) with specialist equipment to aid those who need extra support – this includes people suffering from long-Covid.
- Citizen partnership groups are now transitioning to face-to-face meetings. Where people wish to remain engaged with partnership groups, and are not yet ready to meet face-to-face, they continue to be supported with digital training and the loan of iPads.

Priority

Protect the economy

Overview of progress

Business support

- To support businesses through the pandemic, the council has distributed over £60m in grant funding to over 3,000 businesses and made over 12,000 payments. This encompasses small business and retail grants in phase one, and local restrictions support grants, closed business lockdown payments, a scheme for wet led pubs, restart grants and additional restrictions grant in the second phase.
- The Council has delivered £0.9m of Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grants (OHLG) to 290 eligible businesses, while continuing to distribute Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding. These ARG grants include:
 - Business Growth Scheme: 18 businesses supported, over £72,000 worth of grants issued contributing to an overall project cost of £182,495.
 - Start Up grants: 28 businesses supported, £27,790 worth of grants issued.
 - Covid-19 Renew Grant: Six businesses have been recommended to the panel for approval, receiving funding of £268,450 and contributing to a total project cost of £7,070,886.
 - Business Diversification Scheme: Seven businesses have been recommended to the panel for approval, receiving funding of £208,947 and total project costs totalling £646,607.
- Final payments for OHLG and ARG must be made by 31st March 2022, after which these schemes will progress to the post payments assurance stage.

- The Council has supported businesses in certain sectors that are struggling to recruit via a variety of means, including working closely with partners externally (e.g. DWP) and internally (e.g. working closely with Adult Services to promote the Proud to Care campaign to increase the number of people working in the care sector in North Lincolnshire).
- A Business Renew was event held in November 2021 – this involved a series of presentations, workshops and networking sessions covering subjects that support business growth and help businesses address the challenges of the post-Covid economy.
- In person network meetings resumed allowing businesses to share best practice, develop partnerships and gain an understanding of emerging themes in the sector.
- Support to access Covid-19 funding and grants has enabled business continuity for Early Years settings in North Lincolnshire, with no early years setting going out of business as a result of Covid-19.

Skills and employment

- The Kickstart scheme supports young people aged 16-24 who are claiming Universal Credit with a six-month work placement. North Lincolnshire Council have 41 businesses who have been accepted onto the scheme and 59 young people started a placement.
- 18-24 Youth Hub - since 1st December 2021, the Hub has engaged with 46 young people, of which 34 (85%) have gone into work. The Youth Hub has contributed, along with Kickstart, to reducing youth unemployment in North Lincolnshire from 12.7% pre pandemic to 3.4% on last month's figures. We were successful with our bid to secure Year 2 DWP funds for the Hub.
- To support people to find work, we have been participating in monthly virtual jobs fairs organising by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) since November 2020. We also participated in a virtual apprenticeship event in February 2021.
- Jobs expo events were held in October 2021 and February 2022, attended by more than 40 employers who had hundreds of vacancies on offer. They attracted hundreds of jobseekers from across the region, many of whom found vacancies at the event or obtained an interview.
- 'Discover', a fun, free and interactive future skills event aimed at 8 to 12 year olds was organised, giving this cohort an initial understanding of their career options and the skills required.
- The number of people claiming unemployment related benefit support continues to decrease in North Lincolnshire and for January 2022 stands at 4.0% (some 4,195 people), compared to 5.7% (some 5,885 people) at the same time last year. The claimant count rate remains lower than the regional and national rates of 4.7% and 4.4% respectively.
- 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, as well as securing and retaining full time, permanent employment within Children and Families Safeguarding Organisation.

Visitor economy

Well led council

- Implemented initiatives through the Welcome Back Fund to support local towns across North Lincolnshire (e.g. Foodfests, additional markets, promoting buy local, improving the public realm)
- Participated in Cycle Lincolnshire project to boost cycle tourism in North Lincolnshire and help support local trade and businesses. 2022 has seen a return to a full events schedule in North Lincolnshire.
- With the lifting of restrictions, business as usual operations can be fully prioritised, although the council continues to respond and adapt flexibly to overcome any pressures and issues as they arise.
- Regular updates continue to be provided to the workforce in respect of COVID-19 through bulletins and webinars.
- The council has maintained robust governance arrangements. Following the expiry of legislation that permitted the holding of virtual meetings, decision making has reverted to face-to-face council and committee meetings, with alternative accommodation sourced where required to accommodate social distancing requirements.
- Working with teams/services to ensure infection control is managed as part of general activities has continued – and updated generic risk assessments are available on TopDesk.
- Training has been delivered for managers specifically around risk assessments including COVID-19 and general infection control measures.
- COVID secure sign offs for buildings to re-open have been completed, and buildings re-opened with appropriate controls implemented. The workplace inspection regime now prioritises COVID-19 secure measures.
- The council’s facility in Cary Lane in Brigg is to be redeveloped as a hub for staff to connect and collaborate. This forms part of our post-Covid strategy to provide touchdown and wellbeing spaces for colleagues, further facilitating agile working.