

Covid-19 Recovery Report

Cabinet

Date: 9th September 2020

Author: The Leader of the Council
Chief Executive

Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Covid-19 cases that have been identified and the action taken in accordance with the Local Outbreak Management Plan ("LOMP") including the re-instatement of Gold Response from Monday, 10th August 2020. A verbal update on the current situation will be given at the Cabinet meeting.
- 1.2 The report also sets out the progress the Council has made to recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic
- 1.3 As reported on 1st July 2020 to Cabinet, the majority of the Council's services have been maintained during the Response Phase with increased use of technology and flexible working practices allowing essential services to be provided (Cabinet Minute 5, 2020/21 refers). As the lockdown has eased, many non-essential services have recommenced.
- 1.4 The Recovery Monitoring Report sets out the Council's progress and the steps being taken and planned to meet the demands of negative health, wellbeing and economic consequences as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the Gold response to the recent localised Covid-19 outbreak
 - 2.2 Note the progress towards delivering the Covid-19 Recovery Plan (attached at Annexes One and Two).
 - 2.3 Invite the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review the recovery workstreams of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan, and collate lessons learnt since March 2020 as set out below.
 - 2.3.1 Adults' Health, Adults' Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups workstream.
 - 2.3.2 Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups and Education, Skills & Learning workstreams.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Susie Kemp, Direct Dial Telephone Number: 01793 463008, skemp@swindon.gov.uk.

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2.3.3 Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups and Operational Services workstreams.

2.3.4 Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee - the economy workstream.

2.3.5 Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – the organisation workstream.

3. Response to Recovery

- 3.1 On 16th March 2020, at 9.15am, the CEO declared a major incident in Swindon relating to the Covid-19 pandemic. Alongside this, the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum also declared an emergency situation and set up the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) chaired by Wiltshire Police's Assistant Chief Constable.
- 3.2 Swindon BC played a full part in the SCG alongside the LRF partners, including Wiltshire CC, police, fire, CCG, local hospitals, ambulance, military and the Environment Agency.
- 3.3 The SCG was a vital mechanism to ensure a coherent and proactive response to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.4 From 28th May 2020, SBC began running the Gold Response and Recovery in parallel with the Recovery Plan being signed off by Cabinet on 1st July 2020.
- 3.5 On 21st July 2020, due to the effective and recognised work by Swindon BC and Wiltshire CC in respect of their Recovery Planning and strong plans being in place, the SGC Partners agreed to stand down the formal SGC structure and responsibility for the Recovery phase to SBC and WCC was formally handed over from the SCG to SBC.
- 3.6 In line with the Civil Contingency Act 2004, a Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) was set up on 21st July 2020 chaired by the CEO with SBC senior officers together with those from health and police. The Leader and party group leaders were notified of this as part of the Chief Executive's Officer Decision Note.
- 3.7 The RCG will continue to meet until such time as the Recovery Plan has been deployed with longer term activities being moved into the relevant directorate's Business Plan activities.

August 2020 Standing up Gold Response

- 3.8 On Monday, 10th August 2020, the CEO stood up a Gold Response Group to deal with an increase in transmissions of COVID. This was done in agreement with the Local Resilience Forum and Public Health England and set out in an Officer Decision Notice in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

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- 3.9 Gold is chaired by the CEO with key partners attending and supported by Silver and bronze groups.
- 3.10 The five Bronze groups are
- Intelligence
 - Communications
 - Community Engagement
 - Outbreak Management
 - Shielding
- 3.11 The objectives of the Gold Response Group are:
- 3.11.1 To lead the response to rapidly tackle the rise in covid-19 transmissions within communities with higher levels of covid-19 prevalence:
- 3.11.2 To agree decisive actions, and oversee their implementation, to lead to a rapid reduction in covid-19 transmissions in the affected communities:
- 3.11.3 To lead the continued response if covid-19 transmissions do not fall within expectations and seek national support to introduce further measures to tackle the rise: and
- 3.11.4 To keep response in place until such time as Gold is satisfied that the transmission is at a safe level in line with PHE guidelines and tolerance.
- 3.12 Swindon has been added as an “Area of Concern” to the National Coronavirus list which is overseen by the Department of Health and Social Care. Swindon has been recognised as having a strong grip with daily and detailed reviews in place. It is also recognised that Swindon has a higher than average contact success rate. Swindon’s status is reviewed weekly and at the time of writing, continues as an Area of Concern.
- 3.13 A strong communications campaign is in place “It’s up to all of us” together with targeted messaging in affected postcode areas of SN1 and SN2. Community Leaders have been instrumental in reaching specific areas of the population.
- 3.14 A mobile testing unit has been re-introduced at the County Ground which is being well used by the local community.
- 3.15 Proactive engagement is underway with businesses particularly emphasising advice for those car sharing to get to work. Car share packs have been distributed for those where sharing is unavoidable.
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The Recovery Plan

- 3.16 Cabinet approved the Council's Recovery Plan framework on 1st July 2020 (Cabinet Minute 5, 2020/2021 refers).
- 3.17 The central aim is to meet the ambition set out in the Government's roadmap to 'return to life as close to normal as possible, for as many people as possible, as fast and fairly as possible...in a way that avoids a new epidemic, minimises lives lost and maximises health, economic and social outcomes.'
- 3.18 Working with partners and residents the objectives of the plan are:
- 3.18.1 To support Swindon residents to recover from the effects of Covid 19 on their health and environment as quickly as possible.
 - 3.18.2 To support Swindon businesses to recover from the effects of Covid 19 as quickly as possible.
 - 3.18.3 To ensure community resilience and partnerships are strengthened as a legacy of how the Council and other public bodies have worked through this crisis.
 - 3.18.4 To make the transition from recovery workstreams into business as usual as soon as possible to establish the "New Normal."

Recovery Workstreams.

- 3.19 The six workstreams are set out below along with a summary of their key priorities:
- 3.20 The Organisation – (Cabinet Member: Cllr Jandy - Lead Officer: Sonia Grewal)
Ensure that the workforce are supported to deliver the recovery priorities both in terms of supporting the health and wellbeing of staff and ensuring technology and buildings meet the changed needs. Continue to maximise the benefits of flexible working and new technologies.
- 3.21 Economy – (Cabinet Member: The Leader - Lead Officer: Philippa Venables)
Understand the impact on Swindon's businesses, rolling out Government support packages and introducing new initiatives to support business retention and growth. Identify new opportunities for inward investment and marketing Swindon as a great place for business. Review, prioritise and recommence the Council's programme of capital schemes.
- 3.22 Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups – (Cabinet Members: Cllr Ford, Cllr Martin and Cllr Martyn - Lead Officers: Angela Clarke & Angela Plummer)
Address the impacts of lockdown including increased referrals relating to abusive relationships, alcohol and substance use, and mental health problems.
Recommence day services for adults and children and work with care homes to

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begin to stabilise the care sector. Work with partners to support and meet the needs of vulnerable adults and children including the homeless. Re-introduce and prioritise all housing functions including lettings and work with partners to address neighbourhood tensions.

- 3.23 Health & Wellbeing – (Cabinet Members: Cllr Ford and Cllr Martyn - Lead Officer: Steve Maddern) Understand the impact of Covid-19 on the health of the Swindon population, restarting or introducing new schemes to promote wellbeing. Support Covid-19 related activities such as testing and immunisation and build resilience within the community and health protection services.
- 3.24 Operational Services – (Cabinet Member: Cllr Penny - Lead Officer: Tony Galloway) Reopen facilities such as the HWRC and STEAM and re-start services such as birth registrations and school transport. Meet pent up demand for regulatory services such as planning and meet new demands such as environmental health Covid-19 compliance checks.
- 3.25 Education, Skills & Learning – (Cabinet Member: Cllr Holland - Lead Officer: Sally Burnett) Support the re-opening of education settings ensuring the educational needs of students, particularly the vulnerable are met. Managing the risk of increased unemployment amongst all ages and managing the needs of those not in education, employment or training.

Progress of the Recovery Plan

- 3.26 Significant progress has been made towards delivery of the workstreams and the ongoing activity can be seen in Annex One and completed activity in Annex Two.
- 3.27 Cabinet is requested to consider asking the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review the progress, together with any lessons learnt and future activities to be considered with an update to the Cabinet meeting no later than December 2020.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could decide not to implement the Covid-19 Recovery Plan or the Gold Response Group. In these scenarios it is likely that there will be significant impacts on the health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents along with increased negative economic and financial impacts.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The Council's financial position is being carefully monitored. Short-term, some responses to Covid-19 effects are being funded in part by Central Government and the Council has been allocated £930,773 from the Government to support the implementation of the Local Outbreak Management Plan.

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- 5.2 The Government has also provided Covid 19 emergency funding grant of £13m as well as announcing other elements of financial support. Regular feedback continues to be provided to Central Government in relation to the pressures being faced by the Council in order to inform future funding settlements.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 All legal and human rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention rights.
- 5.4 Officers continue to monitor the special legislation and regulations introduced by government to allow councils to respond so that the delegated powers may be updated, extended, or revoked in a timely manner.

Climate Change Impact

- 5.5 If implemented, some of the recommendations in the Recovery Plan could bring about a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint through an increased use of flexible working and technology reducing the need to travel to/during work and an increased focus on using non-motorised means of transport.
- 5.6 The Council will seek to maximise opportunities to access new funding streams to support sustainable transport and minimise climate change impacts during the recovery period.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.7 The measures set out in the Recovery Plan seek to mitigate the negative health impacts associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 5.8 In order to meet the peaks in demand for services and deliver the programme of actions, staff redeployment will continue to be required in the short-term. The volunteer workforce will be retained where possible and will in particular play an important role in continuing to support shielded individuals.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.9 The measures set out in the Recovery Plan seek to identify and mitigate the negative effects felt by all the Borough's residents as a result of Covid-19 as well as to accentuate any positive changes, for example, better use of accessible technology.
- 5.10 No Diversity Impact assessment (DIA) has been undertaken as the individual schemes will have individual risk assessments and DIAs when they are brought forward for Members' approval. The DIAs will address the needs of the nine

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statutory protected categories as well as Cabinet's additional category of children in care and care leavers.

Risk Management

- 5.11 There continues to be a risk of further virus peaks and the plan will need to be flexible and react to these if they occur. Further peaks are likely to increase the negative impacts associated with the initial lockdown.
- 5.12 Individual schemes will have individual risk assessments and DIA's.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s151 officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Annex 1 – Covid-19 Recovery Plan August 2020
- 8.2 Annex 2 – Covid-19 Recovery Plan completions August 2020

9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan for September 2020