

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

14 July 2020

Subject: Covid-19 Update and steps towards recovery

Cabinet Member: Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Military-Civilian Integration and Communications

Key Decision: Non-Key

Executive Summary

As restrictions are lifted in line with the government's roadmap and based on the latest scientific advice, Wiltshire Council has developed a Local Outbreak Management Plan to support test, track and trace measures and has worked closely with partner agencies to develop a Recovery Plan for the county.

The Recovery Plan will ensure the most vulnerable in the community are supported, provide help to local communities and businesses and implement a range of measures to support health and wellbeing.

Plans are being put in place to support the reopening of services such as libraries and leisure where it is safe to do so and we are providing support and guidance to schools and early years settings to support more children to return safely and adjust to new government guidance.

Proposal(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

- note the development of the Local Outbreak Management Plan;
- note the extensive work undertaken to reopen, reconfigure and develop services; and
- endorse the proposed approach to recovery as set out in the Recovery Plan

Reason for Proposal(s)

The Local Outbreak Management Plan and the RCG Recovery Plan represent important steps forward in our ambition to contain and mitigate the effects of the pandemic – and build back better. The Plans require the support of a range of partners and the public to ensure the successful delivery of their objectives.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

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Purpose of Report

1. This report provides an update on Wiltshire Council's response to the pandemic and its plans for recovery. This builds on previous reports to Cabinet. A financial update is provided in a separate paper.

Background

2. As of Sunday 5 July, 285,416 people in the UK had tested positive for COVID-19, and there have been confirmed 44,220 deaths of people who have had a positive test result in all settings. Further information is available [online](#).
3. With specific respect to Wiltshire, there have now been 1239 people who have tested positive for COVID-19. The rate of positive cases in Wiltshire is 248.8 per 100,000 population which is still lower than that seen in England which is 438.5 per 100,000 population. Up to the 19th June, 357 registered deaths involving Covid-19 in all settings in Wiltshire had occurred. Further information on weekly mortality is available from [ONS](#).
4. On 23 June 2020 the Prime Minister made a [statement](#) to the house announcing that as the government's five tests continue to be met, with the virus no longer spreading exponentially, then further measures can be introduced easing lockdown in England from 4 July 2020. These include:
 - The two metre social distancing rule being relaxed. Where it is possible people should retain two metres but guidance is now 'one metre plus' with mitigating measures.
 - Two households of any size can meet up in any setting.
 - Restaurants and pubs can reopen. All hospitality indoors will be limited to table service.
 - Hair dressers can open but other close contact businesses eg nail bars still under review and cannot open.
 - Hotels, B&Bs and campsites/caravan parks to be opened if they can show they are following strict hygiene requirements.
 - Leisure and other attractions can be opened including outdoor gyms, cinemas, play areas, community clubs and youth centres as long as they are following strict hygiene requirements. However, close contact locations such as nightclubs, swimming pools and indoor gyms will remain closed for the time being (possible further announcements mid-July).

- Close contact sports can only be played if with members of same household.
 - Places of worship to reopen (with social distancing measures and without communal singing) and weddings will be permissible for up to 30 people.
 - Primary and secondary schools' full attendance will recommence in September.
 - Shielding requirements are likely to be relaxed further at the end of this month
5. The government has made these changes conditionally – noting that caution remains the watchword and the moves will be reversed if there is a spike in cases. In line with the latest announcements, Wiltshire Council has developed proposals for COVID-19 secure opening of its services, including registration services, libraries and play areas (with leisure likely to follow). These proposals are developed with appropriate input from public health on risk assessments and reflect available staffing levels (including volunteers) whilst current shielding requirements are in place.
 6. Wiltshire Council continue to provide support for schools to enable as many YR, Y1, Y6, Y10 and vulnerable pupils to attend. Work has also taken place to reconfigure high streets, enable outdoor seating and markets and support businesses to ensure safe spaces with the reopening of non-essential retail.
 7. Alongside measures to ease lockdown, Directors of Public Health were asked to develop Local Outbreak Management Plans (LOMP) for submission to the Department for Health and Social Care by the end of June. The aim of the LOMP is to provide a clear plan on how local government works with the new national NHS test and trace and ensure the council has the necessary capacity and capability to provide a fully co-ordinated approach to contain and manage local outbreaks of COVID-19.
 8. While the plan deals with all local COVID-19 outbreaks, it also identifies and prioritises preventative and early intervention measures for key settings such as care homes and schools and high-risk locations and communities to make sure they are supported.

Main Considerations for the Council

9. Wiltshire's Local Outbreak Management Plan has been developed with input from a wide range of partners and agreed by the co-chairs of the Health and Wellbeing Board – Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of Wiltshire Council and Dr Edd Rendell, Wiltshire Locality Clinical Lead, BSW CCG. It has also been signed off by the Director of Public Health and Chief Executive. A copy of the LOMP is available [online](#). It is a dynamic plan and will be updated as new national guidance is published or legislation changes.
10. Containing local outbreaks, while led by the local Director of Public Health, needs to be a coordinated effort working with:
 - Public Health England (PHE) local health protection teams
 - the NHS
 - social care

- education
 - the police
 - the private sector
 - employers
 - the community and voluntary sector
11. A Local COVID-19 Health Protection Board, chaired by the Director of Public Health will play an important role in bringing partners together, monitoring data and managing outbreaks. This board will sit alongside consideration and communication of any issues by Wiltshire Health and Wellbeing Board partners (chaired by the Leader) and the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum (attended by the Chief Executive)..
12. Members of the general public also have a vital role to play in reducing the spread of the virus and preventing outbreaks. This includes following national guidance and advice about:
- sticking to the social distancing guidelines
 - following good hand and respiratory hygiene practices
 - having a test if displaying symptoms
 - self-isolating if instructed to do so
13. As the focus is moving from the immediate response to the pandemic and into plans for containment and recovery, the Wiltshire and Swindon Local Resilience Forum reviewed its position at the meeting of its Strategic Coordination Group on 30th June. Prior to this both Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council had established in shadow form multi-agency Recovery Coordinating Groups (RCGs). A Memorandum of Understanding outlining the handover of responsibilities has been drafted with the SCG and accordingly it was agreed to transition responsibilities during July and formally stand up RCGs in August.
14. As reported to Cabinet in June, under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, Wiltshire Council has the responsibility to lead recovery and develop a strategic recovery plan, with a CEO chairing the RCG. Whilst in shadow form, partners in the RCG have worked together to develop a Recovery Plan. A copy of this is attached as Appendix 1. The
15. The Recovery Plan sets out objectives and principles for the RCG to work to and similar objectives for each cell to achieve. The plan notes the possibilities to reimagine public service delivery and drive positive behaviour change as well as the ambition of a green economic recovery. The specific objectives are:
- Develop an approach that
 - ensures appropriate interventions to address inequalities and build social mobility
 - ensures the effects of deprivation are considered and interventions developed
 - enables appropriate interventions to support carbon reduction
 - Build a solid foundation so that Wiltshire emerges as a healthier, equitable and more sustainable place to live and work based on the experience of COVID 19 lockdown

- Redesign services together to ensure they are fit for purpose in post-COVID Wiltshire
- Provide support to the DPH with the development, coordination and delivery of the Local Outbreak Control Management Plan
- Ensure vulnerable people are protected and supported to recover from the pandemic in particular emotional and mental health
- Assist educational settings to support children emotionally and academically
- Address the impact of poverty and disproportional impact on those on lower incomes
- Develop and action, plans for safe spaces
- Deliver the requirements set out in The Care Home Strategy
- Secure and supply PPE to all staff in the council, schools and care homes
- Work with partner organisations to lead a shift towards positive long term change in behaviours following COVID-19
- Provide confidence and support to Wiltshire businesses

16. The Principles the RCG will work to are:

- Recognising the financial constraints that public services are now operating under, we will collaborate closely, co-producing solutions with partners which are innovative and cost-effective.
- Recovery that is evidence and data led with a baseline assessment and ongoing outcome based performance measures
- Strong engagement with Wiltshire residents, key stakeholders, community partners, voluntary sector organisations and local businesses in the recovery plan.
- A community centred approach which both reassures and enables Wiltshire's communities to build on their strengths in recovery
- Ongoing liaison with Wiltshire businesses to provide confidence and support
- Forward planning for communications and engagement
- Monitoring of financial matters and pursuit of funding and other assistance
- Strong reporting on recovery to the LRF

17. The Recovery Plan considers preparedness for any second wave, our PPE responsibilities and ongoing intelligence and communications requirements. RCG and recovery theme objectives have also been identified as follows:

RCG - Restore community, public health and wellbeing, environmental and economic resilience following the response to COVID 19.

Economy - Evaluate and understand the impact on Wiltshire's economy and environment, providing support to secure business recovery, revitalise town centres, reduce carbon emissions and support those impacted.

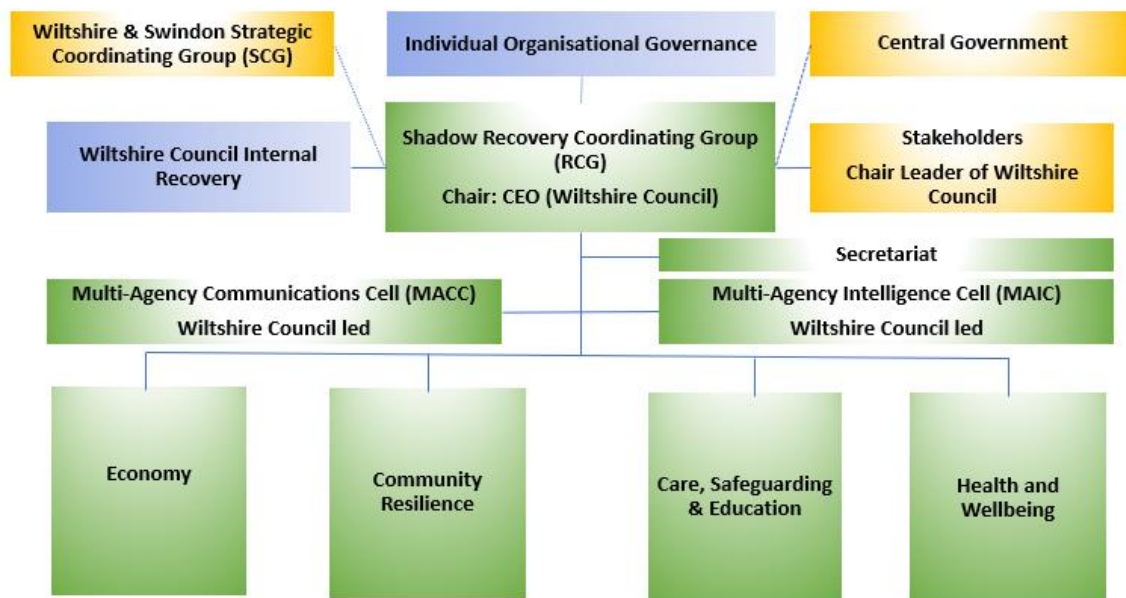
Community Resilience - Build on the Community Resilience shown in the response enabling Wiltshire's communities to take responsibility for their wellbeing, build positive local relationships and to get involved and take actions for what is best for their own communities.

Care, Safeguarding & Education - support the recovery of all age statutory and specialist services and locality based community health & care services and act as the link with the Local Authority command structures.

Health and Wellbeing - Coordinate the health and wellbeing element of the overarching recovery to COVID-19
 Ensure effective local outbreak management of COVID-19



18. The RCG and work under each of the four themes brings together a range of council services alongside partners from the voluntary sector, Police, SWLEP, DWFRS, BSW CCG, Environment Agency, MoD and MHCLG. The Governance Structure is as follows:

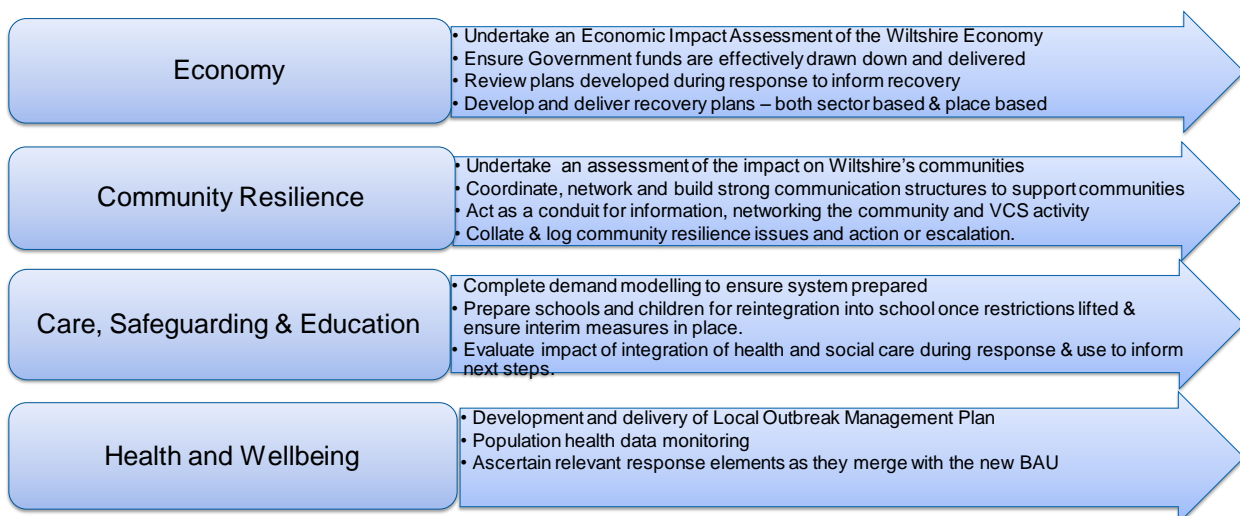


19. The theme leads and sub groups will be chaired by the relevant directors from Wiltshire Council as follows:

Theme Leads and sub theme groups

Economy Sam Fox	Community Resilience Jess Gibbons	Care, Safeguarding & Education Lucy Townsend	Health and Wellbeing Kate Blackburn
Sub theme groups	Sub theme groups	Sub theme groups	Sub theme groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligence & insight (to be integrated into wider RCG group when established) • Employment, skills & financial inclusion • Wiltshire Businesses - Support & development • Economic Partnership Forum • Place shaping (including infrastructure provision, healthy places & carbon reduction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons learnt and impact assessment leading to potential task and finish groups covering: • Diverse & Inclusive communities • Culture, heritage and arts • Community resilience through healthy and active lives • Digital access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families & Children's Transformation (FACT) • Safeguarding • Adult & Health • Care Home Strategy • Partnership Redesign • Educational Outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Health Protection Board • LRF Testing Site group • Wiltshire MH/LD/ASD recovery • Strategic integrated health and care board • Substance Misuse • Homelessness Forum

20. The immediate actions for each of the themes is as follows:



21. The Recovery Plan has been considered by the RCG at its meeting on 24 June 2020 and Cabinet are asked to endorse it with their support, noting that it may evolve further in the coming months to reflect changing circumstances as necessary.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

22. Overview and Scrutiny (OS) engagement on the council's response to COVID-19 and recovery is being led by OS Management Committee and its Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group. Reports to Cabinet on the COVID-19 situation will receive prior scrutiny by the Task Group, with its comments being reported to Cabinet by its chairman. This report will be considered by the Task Group on 7 July 2020

Safeguarding Implications

23. Safeguarding implications have been fully considered as part of the work of on support for vulnerable people within the Community resilience Cell and will continue within the Care, Safeguarding & Education recovery theme. This includes children at risk, domestic abuse, mental health, learning disabilities, rough sleepers and substance misuse.

Public Health Implications

24. This has been referred to throughout the report.

Procurement Implications

25. A sequential approach to supplier relief has been agreed, ensuring that suppliers access central government support where possible first and work with us on an open book basis when necessary.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

26. Work is still underway to fully understand the impact of the pandemic on those with protected characteristics. The Council has been working with partners across Wiltshire, to ensure that those most vulnerable in the community are supported through this incident. Advice has been provided to Directors on ensuring equality implications are considered as part of decisions made and in interim changes to service delivery. Recovery theme leads are also embedding use of a Health Equality Assessment Tool.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

27. The pandemic has had a highly disruptive effect on the economy and consequently seen a reduction in greenhouse emissions. As recovery begins, the good practice and lessons learnt on areas such as video-conferencing and alternative service delivery will be evaluated to ensure this continues where appropriate.

Risk Management

28. Risks associated with COVID-19 response have been incorporated into this report and COVID 19 related risks are owned and regularly reviewed by the Chief Executive. Where appropriate response risks have been carried over into the recovery structure.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

29. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic will have immediate and undoubtedly long lasting significant financial implications for Wiltshire's economy, communities and residents as well as the Council itself. An update on the financial implications and latest outturn is presented in a separate report.

Legal and Governance

30. The governance arrangements underpinning recovery are summarised as follows.

31. The LRF is not a legal entity in its own right, but a partnership that brings together a wide range of partner agencies to co-ordinate delivery on a multi-agency basis of the duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

32. The Recovery Plan states:

This overarching Recovery Plan, developed by the Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) will be agreed by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF), who will own the recovery plan for this major incident across the LRF footprint.This plan covers strategic recovery in Wiltshire, the responsibility for which will be transferred from the Strategic Coordinating Group to Wiltshire Council, as chair of the RCG.

33. The Recovery Plan further states:

Every organisation represented on the RCG will be required to put forward strategic level officers that must be able to take corporate decisions on behalf of their organisation in support of the overall RCG strategy and plan. It is therefore of paramount importance that strategic representatives are invested with the authority necessary to undertake the role provided with the necessary back up and support to ensure any undertaking given by them to the RCG is actionable and deliverable.

34. Therefore, for Wiltshire Council, it will be for Wiltshire Council representatives on the RCG to ensure that they have the necessary authority to commit the council to any actions or resources that may be agreed by the RCG as part of the overall Recovery Plan. This is a matter for the internal governance of the Council. The RCG as a collective does not have the power to direct the Council to act in any particular way or provide resources.

35. For these purposes the normal decision making arrangements of the Council will apply, as set out in the Council's Scheme of Delegation in Part 3 of the

Constitution. This means that significant policy matters will be determined by Council, Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members or Committees as appropriate and officers will make operational decisions within the Scheme of Delegation to Officers. Hence Cabinet is being asked to endorse the Recovery Plan following review by the COVID19 Task Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. Overview and Scrutiny Select Committees will in due course be involved in reviewing and scrutinising recovery activity and decisions and Area Boards will have an important role within the community resilience theme.

36. Other representatives on the RCG will be authorised in accordance with their own organisation's governance arrangements. Where these apply across more than one organisation e.g. health and social care steps will be taken to ensure that these operate efficiently and effectively within the overall governance framework of the RCG.
37. The latest decision notices for executive decisions made by officers under delegated authority in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including those made under emergency powers under the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers, are available [online](#). The use of emergency powers remains a last resort within the criteria prescribed by full council in the constitution and, wherever possible these are taken in consultation with the Leader and the relevant Cabinet Member, with reporting to the next Cabinet meeting and publication of decision notices to ensure openness and transparency.
38. The Business and Planning Bill was laid in Parliament on 25 June 2020 and includes a range of measures to help businesses adjust to new ways of working as we move out of immediate response and lockdown into recovery. The measures support businesses to implement safer ways of working to manage the ongoing risks from COVID-19, in particular the need for social distancing. They include:
 - Making it easier for premises in England serving food and drink such as bars, restaurants and pubs to seat and serve customers outdoors through temporary changes to planning procedures and alcohol licensing.
 - Changes to planning law to ensure that the planning system can continue to operate effectively and support the planning and safe construction of new development following the impact of Covid-19.

Workforce Implications

39. A number of services, teams or groups of staff continue to work in COVID-19 secure workplaces which include:
 - Council owned hubs, buildings, sites or other settings
 - Respite centres, resource centres
 - Council depots
 - Places that they visit as part of their role within the community (e.g. home visits)
40. As additional teams make requests to return to workplace, a toolkit has been made available which includes a robust risk assessment process for

managers to consider the needs of their staff. The process includes input from HR, Occupational Health and Safety, Facilities Management, ICT and Public Health and a union representative. Longer term, thought is been given to appropriate staffing structures.

41. The recovery phase is likely to require unprecedented levels of orchestration and coordination during a challenging and potentially protracted recovery period. The financial risks may therefore impede or limit the ability to which the Council can resource and deliver a large scale recovery programme whilst maintaining all its other statutory services.
42. Alongside ensuring the capacity and organisational resilience to lead and support recovery is in place the Council in common with other organisations will be undertaking its own internal review and reshaping resources to align these with the post pandemic response. An internal recovery group will also assess, evaluate and review the way in which the council has operated during lockdown to embed some of the positive COVID-19 driven changes and to identify further opportunities to deliver services differently.

Conclusions

43. The Local Outbreak Management Plan and the RCG Recovery Plan represent important steps forward in our ambition to contain and mitigate the effects of the pandemic – and build back better. The Plans require the support of a range of partners and the public to ensure the successful delivery of their objectives.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

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6th July 2020

Appendices
Recovery Plan

Background Papers

[Local Outbreak Management Plan](#)
[Integrated Emergency Management Plan](#)