

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

8 July 2020

Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group: Update on the meeting held on 7 July 2020

Purpose

1. To provide an update on the meeting of the Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group held on 7 July 2020.

Recent activity

2. On 7 July 2020, the task group met to consider the following reports (links provided), which will be considered by Cabinet on 14 July 2020:

COVID-19 Update and Steps to Recovery

[Covid 19 and Recovery Cabinet Report FINAL](#)
[COVID-19 Recovery Plan v200702](#)

COVID-19 Financial Update and Period 2 Budget Monitoring

[Covid Update and Budget Monitoring Report Cabinet \(Period 2\)](#)
[Appendix A Annual TM Report 2019-2020](#)

3. The task group also considered an [individual Cabinet member decision](#) setting out options for the reopening of libraries within the Wiltshire Council during the COVID19 pandemic and seeking agreement of:
 - The consultation approach and timeline for reopening Wiltshire Libraries
 - The options for reopening during the pandemic to be consulted upon
 - A single member decision to be taken on the outcome of the consultation and final approach for reopening during the pandemic
4. Members were joined by the following guests:

Cllr Philip Whitehead	Leader of the Council
Cllr Richard Clewer	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing Communities
Cllr Pauline Church	Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement Commercial investment
Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling	Cabinet Member for ICT, Digitalisation, Operational Assets, Leisure & Libraries
Terence Herbert	Chief Executive Officer

Andy Brown	Interim Corporate Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer
Allison Elliot	Director for Adult Social Care
Sam Fox	Director for Economic Development and Planning
Ian Gibbons	Director for Legal and Governance
Jo Pitt	Director for HR and Organisational Design
David Redfern	Head of Communities
Lucy Townsend	Interim Corporate Director for People
Kartar Singh	Executive Officer
Henry Powell	Democracy Manager (Scrutiny)

Covid-19 Update, Recovery and Financial Update

5. The task group asked questions on the reports to Cabinet, covering following topics:
6. How to capture the energy shown by the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in responding to covid-19 will be carefully considered under the Community Resilience theme of the Recovery Plan.
7. The Economic Partnership Forum (which falls under the Economy theme of the Recover Plan) draws together a number of groups representing the Wiltshire business community e.g. Visit Wiltshire, the Federation for Small Business, Chambers of Commerce and Salisbury Business Improvement District (BID). The views of businesses are sought through these representative groups on issues such as the design of the discretionary grant scheme.
8. It was clarified that the Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) is a multi-agency coordinating group populated by officers. Councillors form the stakeholder group and also undertake their scrutiny and decision-making roles in the normal way i.e. through overview and scrutiny, Cabinet and Full Council.
9. It was confirmed that the registrations service is now operational. Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) will continue to operate a booking system whilst social distancing is in place to limit the number of people on site for safety reasons. There has been a positive response to the booking system currently in place.
10. Clarity is being sought from Government on end-dates for schemes like the Business Support Grant scheme.
11. All Covid-19 patient discharges from hospital were funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The council is now ensuring these patients are assessed in terms of care need and financial status to ensure the appropriate care arrangements are in place.
12. A significant backlog of medical procedures due to covid-19 is expected, along with an associated impact on adult social care demand. For example, someone

who's hip replacement has been delayed and needs some care support as a consequence.

13. Until further announcements from Central Government emerge, the council's funding gap cannot be accurately projected. It is therefore prudent to put in place financial controls in order to manage council spend.
14. Despite covid-19, results from a recent internal staff survey were more positive than those from the previous annual staff survey. Staff are being supported to maintain their wellbeing while working remotely through a package that includes a variety of online groups, activities and communication channels.

Re-opening of Libraries

15. Over 4000 responses to the consultation have already been received, suggesting a strong public interest in the libraries service. Rather than just lending books, all aspects of the modern library service are being considered, for example, providing internet access.

Proposal

16. To note the update on the meeting of the Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group held on 7 July 2020.

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