

**Summary notes of the informal (non-public) discussion meeting of  
Environment Select Committee**

**25 November 2020**

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1. The select committee discussed the COVID-19 update report going to Cabinet 1 December 2020.
2. The Committee was interested in how the Council's libraries and leisure services were operating under the tighter COVID-19 restrictions. In particular whether leisure centres would be opening when restrictions are lifted on 3 December. It was raised that certain outdoor leisure activities could continue during lockdowns. The Committee thought that some leisure centres might be suitable as vaccination centres.
3. There was a discussion about the Council's response to the economic impacts of COVID-19. Green recovery grants are now available, there is some evidence that home owners are finding it difficult to employ people with the right skills. The committee was interested in knowing how the council was ensuring that there are enough qualified people to deliver these grants. It also would like to know how the business support grant schemes was identifying and making people aware of what is available, particularly very small businesses. There was an opportunity for the council to help small business owners to diversify and develop new ways of working.
4. A number of new walking and cycling initiatives have been introduced this year and the Committee was interested in what lessons have been learnt when delivering the new schemes, particularly around identifying priorities and consultations.
5. There has been a temporary increase in funding to support homeless people during the pandemic. The Committee was interested in how that funding had supported the delivery of the longer-term Homelessness strategy.
6. There was interest in the current position on the asset transfer programme and what will be the position post-lockdown. Some time limited Section 106 money may be lost due to delays enforced by COVID restrictions, the Committee thought that there could be a way of extending the time periods.
7. The Committee developed a number of questions, arising from the discussion above, to be raised at the COVID-19 Response task group (26 November 2020)