Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

3 November 2020

Subject:	**COVID-19 Update**
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

This report provides a summary of activity to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last detailed update to Cabinet in October. There is work underway on preparing a local model for enhanced contact tracing to improve compliance locally and to identify other local testing sites, support for businesses, work to secure investment as part of the public sector green energy scheme, preparations to deliver the Adult Social Care Winter Plan, support for vulnerable groups and care homes and close working with schools and transport providers continues.

Proposals
Cabinet are asked to:
- Continue to encourage all residents to download the NHS Test and Trace app on their phone.
- Note changes in national policy and the work underway within the four Recovery Coordinating Group themes and on Organisation Recovery.

Reason for Proposal(s)

Wiltshire Council continues to work closely with partners to deliver in a rapidly changing environment.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

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Purpose of Report

1. A brief summary of the key activity to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last detailed update to Cabinet in October.

Background

2. As of Sunday 25 October 2020, 873,800 people in the England had tested positive for COVID-19. Further information is available online. The ONS suggest that as of 9 October there were 53,030 registered COVID-19 deaths across England and Wales. In Wiltshire, there have now been 2,729 people who have tested positive for COVID-19. The rate of cases per 100,000 in Wiltshire in the last 7 days is 71.2.   Up to the 9 October, 368 registered deaths involving COVID-19 in all settings in Wiltshire had occurred (208 in care homes, 135 in hospital, 22 at home and 3 in hospices). Further information on weekly mortality is available from ONS.

Main Considerations for the Council

3. Since the last update to Cabinet the Prime Minister announced on 12 October a three tier level alert system. Wiltshire is in Tier 1.

4. Funding has been allocated to Wiltshire Council for COVID-19 compliance activity. The funding will be used to aid public and business awareness and understanding of regulations and guidance. Government have confirmed £201,770 funding to Wiltshire local authority under the Local Authority Compliance and Enforcement Grant.   The data for Wiltshire currently shows strong compliance from residents, communities and businesses once they understand what they are required to do; but we do have a significant level of queries coming into both our Public Health and Public Protection teams seeking guidance and support. Proposals are to adopt an engagement and education approach, with an additional focus on behaviour-change within groups where infection rates remain high.

5. Under the Contain Outbreak Management Fund Local Authorities will be eligible for a series of payments to support proactive containment and intervention

measures, ranging from £1 per head of population to £8 per head depending on which alert level a Local Authority is placed within.

6. An additional £1b has recently been announced to support Local Authorities over winter and we are awaiting details on the amount to be made available to Wiltshire along with requirements of its allocation.

7. The [Adult Social Care Winter Plan](#) has been published with the aim of curbing the spread of COVID-19 infections in care settings. It outlines the actions every local area (Local Authorities and NHS partners) and every care provider must take in order to manage the challenges the sector will face this winter.

8. The Recovery Coordinating Group continues to meet in Wiltshire, with work continuing under the four themes –Health and Wellbeing; Care, Safeguarding and Education; Community Resilience and Economy. Significant developments since the last report are summarised under the sub-headings below; with additional detail in **Appendix 1**.

Test and Trace

9. Concerns from local residents over booking tests local to them have decreased since September, with anecdotal evidence confirming national intelligence that pillar 2 community testing access is improving. The return of schools has proved challenging with additional demand placed on testing, however, the provision of 10 test kits per school (as a minimum and replaced every 21 days) has assisted with testing accessibility.

10. Work is ongoing to identify LTS (Local Testing Sites) across more specific local settings within communities that allow for walk-in testing and are housed inside, usually at community centres and local halls.

11. Following two successful pilots in the South West trialling locally enhanced contact tracing, Wiltshire is developing its local model for enhanced contact tracing to improve compliance locally, reduce viral transmission and support residents through a number of initiatives such as the wellbeing hub and the self-isolation payments, to self-isolate.

12. The local contact tracing team will receive training from the national team in the use of the online recording system, and will primarily follow up individuals by telephone, text and by door knocking, who the national call handlers have been unable to engage with.

Outbreak Management

13. We are continuing to exercise the Local Outbreak Management Plan, and have to date exercised with partners five scenarios, with the next taking place in November. Following the feedback and learning from these, the plan will be updated accordingly.

14. We have initiated a weekly tactical group to review our system response to rising case numbers, events and outbreaks which complements the fortnightly

COVID19 health protection board which sets the strategic direction for outbreak management.

Safe Spaces

15. We continue to work closely with our partners in town councils to evaluate the effectiveness of social distancing schemes that have been implemented and have a clear structure in place with weekly meetings overseeing all schemes for creating safe space for walking and cycling.

Community Spaces

16. From Tuesday 20 October 2020 all staffed libraries and mobiles will be open and operating a COVID safe model.   All hybrid (Level 3) libraries will be open by mid-November and the (Level 2) volunteer run libraries (infection rates, volunteer availability and space permitting) will be open by the end of the year.

Care Homes

17. Ongoing support to care homes via a dedicated helpline and fortnightly webinars with providers is continuing to be provided as well as some additional thematic webinars, for example on infection control.

18. The Government has recently announced that PPE will be provided free to care providers via the national portal, although some supply chain issues have been recently reported.

19. Wiltshire has witnessed an increase in care homes reporting positive COVID-19 tests for staff and residents from mid-September 2020. In the week ending 9 October, 13 care homes reported positive COVID cases. The total was 24 cases, with half of those being staff members.

20. Multiple cases in a single setting continues to be a rare occurrence, showing how infection control measures supported by regular testing continue to be effective measures preventing widespread transmission in these settings. Stringent adherence to infection prevention and control guidance reinforced with testing for individuals on admission into care homes from hospital have meant there remains no association of this movement and risk of transmission of COVID-19.

21. The Council continues to work closely with Wiltshire Care Partnership, Public Health England, CQC and BSW CCG to ensure action is taken in a timely manner.

Social Care

22. We are continuing to see increasing demand in terms of discharges from acute and community hospitals. The majority of people leaving hospital are returning home which is a positive picture. We are working closely with our community health partners to maximise our community resource in order to support flow.

23. We are also moving towards a new Discharge to Assess model for people who need to receive support or rehabilitation in a care home bed after their stay in

hospital. We are working with care home providers to deliver a model of care based on rehabilitation and reablement that improves outcomes for individuals.

24. In terms of PPE, we will shortly begin to take delivery of PPE on behalf of DfE for education and childcare settings within our area. The education/childcare settings would only request PPE from us if their source were to fail/delay and the arrangements would be for them to collect from our supplies at Five Rivers as it is with the other sectors.

Education

25. Attendance continues to be monitored daily via the DfE register. To achieve full attendance the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and a 'team around the school' approach remains in place. The numbers of families opting to home-educate (elective home education EHE) has continued to increase across term 1 and is being monitored.

26. We continue to fully support education establishments in the event of a member of the school community being confirmed to have Covid-19.

27. On the 12 October 2020 the Government announced that the summer exams will take place and, in most cases, these will be held 3 weeks later to help address the disruption caused by the pandemic. Further detail will be published later in the autumn, to ensure students have confidence that they will be treated fairly in terms of assessment in 2021. Results days are Tuesday 24 August 2021 for A and AS levels and Friday 27 August for GCSEs so students can start the following academic year as normal. We anticipate further guidance to cover contingency plans for all possible scenarios.

28. All schools will be receiving £650 million of universal catch-up premium funding in addition to their usual pupil premium funding. In addition there is funding to be used for the most disadvantaged learners to receive 1:1 tuition through the national tutoring programme or national coaching programme. School catch up plans were focused on 3 tiers (1 for full return to school, tier 2 for where some pupils are taught via online learning due to self-isolation with other pupils in school and tier 3 for where all pupils are again learning at home) and are now required to plan for a fourth tier where bubbles may be on a 2 week rotation of in school and online learning. The organisation recovery programme continues to make progress and all activities are activities are now defined within five workstreams

29. There is no requirement for social distancing on home to school transport as per government guidance, so we have introduced:

- Additional cleaning of vehicles with particular attention being paid to frequently touched areas such as door handles, bells pushes, arm rest etc
- Good ventilation should be maintained at all times
- Face coverings should be worn, where pupils can wear them (government guidance is only a recommendation to wear them)
- Worked with public health to determine a process should a school bubble be closed down

<u>Organisation Recovery Programme</u>

30. The organisation recovery programme continues to make progress and all activities are now defined within five workstreams:

- Workspaces & Workplaces
- High Performing Culture
- Agile Workforce
- Wellbeing and Engagement
- Commercial

31. One example of work that has is being progressed by the Agile Workforce workstream are new approaches to support the more flexible deployment of staff, which aligns with two of the agreed outcomes of the programme to deploy our staff and resources to meet business need and ensure the council is financially viable. These new approaches include:

- Flexible use of upskilling apprenticeships
- Career step roles
- Deployment talent pools
- Generic business support roles
- Extending internal opportunities to Wiltshire care leavers

32. A further example of work being progressed is the pilot of a desk booking app in Monkton Park as part of the work of the Workspaces and Workplaces workstream.

33. Further information about some of the work of the recovery programme is outlined in Appendix 1.

Safeguarding Implications

34. Adult and Children's social care continue to maintain all statutory requirements. The Council is continuing to see an increase in demand for both children's support and safeguarding services and we still expect this to accelerate through late October and to continue at least until the end of the financial year with a significant increase in the number of children who become subject to child protection plans or looked after. A significant increase in referrals is forecast through November and December 2020 into Adult social care. Planning is underway to ensure statutory social care demand can be met and demand modelling is continuing to draw data and intelligence from a wide range of providers and partner organisations to enable a system wide response.

35. The number of vulnerable pupils (those with social workers) is closely monitored, attendance averages around 90% for these groups, families of individual children who are not attending school receive support and supervision from social care.

36. Work is underway to understand the recent government announcements for MHCLG funding being made available (in-year) to support the local authority's response to domestic abuse and support to victims and their families and it's preparedness of the new Domestic Abuse Bill coming into effect in April 2021.

Economy

37. As of September 2020, Wiltshire has 12,605 individuals claiming unemployment benefits, of which 2660 are under the age of 24. This is slightly higher than the peak of the financial recession, where 2400 young people were unemployed in Wiltshire. A Task and Finish Group has been set up to oversee a coordinated, multi-agency approach to the Kickstart Programme. The Kickstart Fund is a £2bn programme offering 16-24 year olds 6 month work placements from November. Details of how Kickstart is helping our young people back into employment and training will continue to be provided in these regular updates

38. Ongoing support is being provided to Wiltshire's larger businesses through the Wiltshire 100 programme, especially on providing support for redundancy and training where there are redundancies being planned and announced. The Economy Theme is working with partners through the Education, Employment and Skills Advisory Group (EESAG) in developing and rolling out redundancy support mechanisms and an approach to using data to map job vacancies with the skill sets of those seeking re-employment

39. The Business Grants schemes awarded a total of £95m to 8000 Wiltshire businesses under the Small Business; Retail, Hospitality and Leisure; and Discretionary grant schemes. The Task and Finish Group that was set up to deliver this work has now been de-commissioned, with a small number of staff continuing to undertake the reconciliation process. Government guidance is expected on the reconciliation process and this will be completed by 30th October.

40. The guidance on the self-isolation payment scheme was launched recently and will enable £500 one-off payments from 28th September to January 2021 to support low income families with Covid-19 symptoms needing to self-isolate. A governance structure has been put in place to oversee this work and a team has now been mobilised to process these payments. An IT package has been procured at short notice to enable the necessary data to be handled, ensuring payments can now be processed.

41. The Local Restrictions Support Grant has been expanded to cover businesses that, as a result of restrictions set by government, are legally required to close their premises (due to either local or national restrictions). The scheme has increased payments, up to £3,000 per month, rather than up to £1,500 per three weeks, and they are eligible for payment sooner, after only two weeks of closure rather than three.

42. The scheme is subject to eligibility criteria. We are now awaiting the formal guidance on the LRSG to be updated, and we have asked colleagues at BEIS to provide further information on whether this grant will be available for Wiltshire businesses. A team has been set up in readiness to administer this grant if required due to any future local restrictions.

43. Following the announcement of a £1bn public sector green energy scheme the Recovery Coordinating Group is working on a multi-agency bid to secure

investment in Wiltshire, and is also encouraging Wiltshire businesses to register with 'Trustmark' to provide the Green Home Grants Scheme.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

44. This report will be considered by the Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group on 28 October 2020, with members of the Executive and senior officers in attendance to answer members' questions. Updates on the Task Group's work are brought to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, which next meets on 18 November 2020.

45. The report will also be considered by the Children's, Environment and Health Select Committee in November, with each receiving further updates within their committee remits.

Procurement Implications

46. A sequential approach to supplier relief was agreed earlier on in the response phase of the pandemic, ensuring that suppliers were pointed to central Government support where possible first and work with us on an open book basis when necessary. The Council has established an internal Commercial Board to provide oversight and assurance on the end to end procurement process around future contract activity and management.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

47. Work continues to understand the impact of the pandemic on those with protected characteristics. Equality implications are being considered in the Council's decision making and any changes to service provision. Recovery theme leads have embedded the use of a Health Equality Assessment Tool. The Community Resilience theme working with partners is leading on work to enable Wiltshire's communities to be cohesive places where difference is celebrated.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

48. A new Climate Strategy will be developed in the coming year to set out how the council is going to meet its challenging targets to become carbon neutral by 2030. As part of developing the strategy, each Recovery Theme will need to consider the environmental impact of its activities and identify opportunities to contribute to a green recovery. Given that green jobs are a key element of the recovery, the Economy theme group has been promoting the Green Homes Grant to residents and encouraging local businesses to register for the scheme.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

49. A new partnership risk register is in place and owned by the RCG. This comprises risks identified by each of the themes and risks being managed in the workstreams. Recovery partnership risks are managed in themes on separate registers with an escalation procedure for significant risks to be reviewed by the RCG. Wiltshire Council specific risks around recovery are managed with in the Organisational Recovery programme on a separate register. That register will

feed into the Council's Strategic Risk Register. Wiltshire Council's Performance and Risk Management reporting will resume for quarter two 2020/21.

Financial Implications

50. An update on the financial implications for the council and latest outturn will be provided to cabinet in a separate report as part of the regular schedule of updates.

Legal Implications

51. The Council's legal team continues to provide advice on the application of new Covid-19 legislation and all aspects of recovery.

Workforce Implications

52. Government guidance about employment matters affected by the pandemic continues to be applied. The COVID-19 policy implemented in March 2020 sets out information for staff, including the application of policies and procedures to support response and during recovery, and will continue to be reviewed and updated following consultation with the trade unions.

53. The organisation recovery programme is taking steps to assess, evaluate and review the way in which the workforce operated during lockdown so that we can embed some of the positive changes and identify new opportunities to deliver services differently. The organisation recovery programme is taking steps to assess, evaluate and review the way in which the workforce operated during lockdown so that we can embed some of the positive changes and identify new opportunities to deliver services differently. Further details on the steps taken towards organisation recovery are provided in **Appendix 1.**

Conclusions

54. Wiltshire Council continues to play a critical role with its partners and the local community in responding to the impact of the coronavirus in the county.

Terence Herbert, Chief Executive

Report Author: Layla Bridger, Recovery Project Support Officer
22 October 2020.

Appendices: Appendix 1: Additional detail on work under themes and on Organisation Recovery

Appendix 1

Health and Wellbeing – additional information

Homelessness Form

- The forum will concentrate on delivering the action plan of the recently agreed Homeless strategy. The response to the pandemic has accelerated the action plan work.
- Due to Court closure homeless approaches have reduced over the last couple of months and those that have been made are in the main a consequence of relationship breakdown. However, prevention work and the demand for social housing has nearly doubled since July. This demand has been met from existing resources due to the re prioritisation of work, the introduction of direct lets during lockdown and agreement on areas of work that we have been able to stop. The area of homeless demand that has required particular focus is rough sleeping.
- Our response to 'getting all rough sleepers off the streets' during Covid was outstanding and with the support of the rough sleeper team and other partners we have managed to find long term accommodation for 71 rough sleepers and currently only have 2 rough sleepers left from the original cohort to find longer term accommodation for.
- The homeless strategy action plan set out developing an accommodation pathway for rough sleepers, with our intensive support accommodation followed by both a housing led and housing 1st model. This has been supported by Government in our recent bid to assist rough sleepers in getting the support they need at the time they need it by the allocations of £47,456.40. Although some of our rough sleepers have been provided with supported accommodation there is evidence that they are gravitating back to areas such as the Maltings car park which was raised at the last homeless forum. A co-ordinated approach to tackling anti-social behaviour in such areas has now been developed up as part of a task and finish group with multi agency support.
- Support for prison leavers was an area of concern during the height of the pandemic so two new posts were established who are dedicated to working specifically with offenders funded by the RSI year 3 funding, the CRC and OPCC. Both are based at Wiltshire Council, however one is a jointly funded with Swindon and focuses on prison release cases. In addition an offender navigator post is working with rough sleepers in Wiltshire with a history of offending or who are managed by MAPPA and in need of suitable accommodation
- As we approach winter we are working with partners to consider our response to (SWEP) severe weather emergency provision. Government guidelines has restricted the type of accommodation that can be offered so plans are currently being developed and we have recently been successful in obtaining £2,600 funding to assist with this.

Upcoming mental health work

- Partners from the VCSE, statutory and health organisation came together for the first reconvening of the THRIVE meetings on Monday 19th October to discuss MH service design. The intention will be to provide a comprehensive model of mental health support ranging from preventative models for low level mental health issues to supporting people with serious mental illness living in the community. The new model will also address mental health issues which have been exacerbated by Covid.

Anti-social behaviour

- The first task and finish group bringing together relevant partners and agencies to agree a shared approach to effectively and appropriately engage with communities and individuals around the issues of anti-social behaviour was held on the 22 September. The multi-agency group identified key issues and agreed a shared approach, to effectively and appropriately engage with communities and individuals, around the issues of anti-social behaviour, county wide. The task and finish group is now progressing the development of the outcomes, mapping and action plans.

Health Inequalities

- Data from the JSNA is being used to support a public health informed approach to addressing inequality across all themes of recovery, and within wider system partners key strategic policy setting. The Chair of the HWB recovery cell is responsible for ensuring that all elements of recovery have a good understanding of how inequality is impacting upon the Wiltshire population and what steps as a partnership we can all take to reduce this. This work will be informed and collated through the health and wellbeing recovery cell but will be delivered across the workstreams within all recovery theme areas as appropriate to the relevant service/partners.

Care, Safeguarding and Education Theme – additional information

Education

- The weekly attendance data survey of early years providers indicates that of the 94% of settings that respond 89% are open. There is sufficient childcare provision currently, some new providers have opened and some existing providers have extended their provision. The DfE have advised that settings should be funded '*broadly in line with 2019' to* maintain sufficiency. As some settings have more children this year whilst other have fewer, a funding solution has been developed with the Early Years Reference Group's agreement. This is to ensure that sufficiency is maintained and that all settings receive some funding

Safeguarding implications

- The Vulnerable People's Stakeholder Group (continues to meet fortnightly) for further discussion and to develop a system wide response. This includes the National Probation Service, Wiltshire Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner's office who are developing a greater understanding of how the backlog in the Courts and wider criminal justice system is impacting on the safeguarding of the most vulnerable across Wiltshire.

Families and Children Transformation Programme (FACT)

FACT

- The FACT Executive and Operational Boards continue to oversee the delivery of the revised programme structure focussing on the following 6 priority projects;
    - Early Support Assessment - implementation plan
    - Inclusive approaches - alternative education provision
    - Young People's Service - multi agency staffing
    - School Readiness - speech, language and communication in the early years
    - Integrated Working - MH/LD/ASD
    - Transitional Safeguarding - older adolescents and young adults

The projects are at varied stages of development and operating to different timescales in terms of their predicted end dates. The current focus is on ensuring each project has an effective multi-agency project board driving its progress and a clear set of objectives and milestones. Refined versions of the project plans will be considered by the FACT Executive Board in November.

Community Resilience Theme

Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub

- While calls into the Wellbeing hub have continued to remain low during September and early October plans are underway to prepare for a second wave of COVID cases. We are working to ensure support is available to the increasing numbers of people having to self-isolate with a focus on those without existing support networks.

Community Engagement

- Wiltshire Together community digital platform set-up by Wessex Community Action enables communities to post their activities and share information on volunteering. COVID19 community support groups are now using this platform.

- Virtual partner engagement events are being hosted by each Area Board focusing on the local impact of COVID19.

- Local Recovery Plans will be developed and delivered in partnership with local communities, using data from various sources, including partners, to

understand emerging trends and gaps, which will inform priorities moving forward.

Community Spaces

- Working with Community First and our strategic arts partners we are pulling together support to community groups and village halls struggling to open in a COVID19 safe way. Guidance and advice will be provided to seek to ensure our communities are able to engage in COVID19 safe activity through the winter months.

Inequalities workstream

- COVID19 has impacted the arts and cultural sector significantly, with some large venues still unable to open and those that are having to operate in completely different resource intensive ways. It is therefore very good news that the Culture Recovery Fund investment administered by Arts Council England has confirmed over £1.2 million funding to Wiltshire organisations, including Chalke Valley History Festivals, Pound Arts, Wiltshire Music Centre and Wiltshire Creative.

- The BAME inequality project has so far focused on language and culture as barriers to engagement and understanding key public health messages. Communications materials have been produced in a range of languages and community and religious leaders have been identified to act as a trusted source of information to disseminate messages into communities.

- Potential impacts on LGBTQ people were identified early in the pandemic. An impact survey carried out in April 2020 by the Intercom Trust has identified: being restricted to homes where other family members are not accepting of their sexuality/gender identity (in some cases leading to domestic violence), harassment from neighbours, difficulty accessing medication (especially for trans*), gender reassignment being put on hold, being statistically more likely to be estranged from family and friends or having a less traditional "chosen family" who they may not live with, leading to loneliness during lockdown as some of the impacts

- An LGBTQ project is gathering further data on this specific to Wiltshire, with a defined purpose of: strengthen opportunities for LGBT+ residents of Wiltshire to lead safe, active and healthy lives, and to be part of a strong, vibrant and engaged community.

Organisation Recovery

Below are some examples of the work being progressed by two of the organisation recovery programme workstreams: Agile Workforce and Workspaces & Workplaces.

- The experience of the councils response the pandemic which demonstrated that there is strength in having confident, skilled people who are willing to work in an agile and flexible way, and enabled us to deploy staff from across the organisation into critical service areas with a specific business need and support our most vulnerable residents.

- Whilst the existing HR policies supported this response the current freeze on external recruitment as part of the spending control measures in place has meant that wherever possible vacancies are being filled through the identification of resource from within our existing workforce. This, together with the outcomes of the recovery programme have resulted in the Agile Workforce workstream developing new approaches to further support a more agile workforce. These new approaches include:
    - Flexible use of upskilling apprenticeships, to support staff to complete a qualification in a new service are/profession as part of a secondment, utilising the apprenticeship levy an enabling these staff to progress along an otherwise unavailable career path. In these scenarios staff can complete an apprenticeship in a lower graded role, with their pay protected for the duration of the apprenticeship and with the aim of moving into a role permanently on completion of the qualification.
    - Career step roles, to support staff to develop into a role where they do not currently meet the essential criteria and would otherwise not be considered as suitable. In this scenario the employee would be developed to meet the essential criteria in a lower graded career step role with a portfolio of knowledge, skills and experience that would need to be gained before progressing.
    - Deployment talent pools, this builds on the positive feedback from staff who were deployed during the Covid response to undertake new roles in different services, which provided opportunities to develop skills, increase resilience and confidence and opened potential careers paths that they may not have previously considered. To maintain this as part of the agile workforce aims talent pools are being developed that will enable staff to be quickly identified when there is a need to deploy suitable skilled and experienced staff quickly in response to business priorities.
    - Generic business support roles, there are current 149 individual role description for business administration roles in the business support job family and this means staff in these roles are working in line with the specific tasks and duties described in their role description. To support for efficient deployment and the development of multi skilled staff in these roles we are taking steps to introduce a single role description for each of the business administration grades that will apply to all new recruits in these posts, and will be introduced for all roles as part of service redesign. A model template to advertise these roles will also be used so that staff recruited understand that there is a requirement for flexibility and that they could be moved between directorates, both to support service delivery and for their own development. This will support more efficient deployment of staff in these roles.

- Extending internal opportunities to Wiltshire care leavers, due to the limited number of roles which are being made available for external recruitment, and in line with our Corporate Parenting responsibility, we have extended the criteria of who can apply for roles advertised as "internal only" to enable applications from Wiltshire Care Leavers to be considered.

- As part of planning for a return to the workplaces the Workspaces & Workplaces workstream are progressing a pilot of a desk booking App that will support efficient and effective use of our workspaces in the future. The App will enable desk spaces to be set up and show as 'available/occupied'. The desk will be in an area of desks, rather than a specific desk (such as when booking a train seat). Staff will be able to load the App onto their phone or laptop and book a desk for a day, up to 5 days at a time. There will also be an option for a manager to approve if necessary and staff will be able 'check in' by telling the App they have arrived at the office. If they do not, then the booking would be cancelled.

- The App has been developed using PowerApps, a free tool. It is likely that the development can also be used for other purposes as we consider more Apps in the future. We will also be able to extract management information about booking and attendance to produce reports.

- The pilot will take place in Monkton Park, and will commence in mid-November.

- A series of manager workshops has taken place, and this has focused on understanding on the impact of the way in which service shave been delivered and the way in which staff have worked since March. The feedback from these workshops will inform the work of the recovery programme but some key themes from these workshops were:
  - Employee wellbeing and engagement
  - Acceptance that increased working from home will be part of future ways of working
  - Partnership working and opportunity to share resources and space
  - The leveraging of technology to improve efficiency and support new ways of working, and better suite of tools/devices to support this
  - Need for simple, intuitive processes that trust and empower

- An employee wellbeing & engagement survey has been carried out following the same survey in May that saw an engagement score of 88 but also highlighted some issues about home working. Action's to ensure staff have access to support for home working have been taken since then, including additional wellbeing support via the Flourish (employee wellbeing website), a series of webinars and a process to support ad hoc return to the workplace. The recent survey included some additional questions about the impact of working at home on employee well being and on the future ways of working so that we can understand the impact of being able to sustain working at home and to the extent this will be possible without impacting on engagement

and wellbeing. The results of this survey will also inform the work of the recovery programme and the results will be available later in November.