



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	COVID-19 Emergency Planning Update (November 2020)	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team: 20th October 2020	X
	Leader and Deputy Leaders: 26th October 2020	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group / Independent Alliance Advisory Group: 4th & 5th November 2020	X
	Cabinet: 16th November 2020	
	Scrutiny Audit and Value for Money Council Services Committee Scrutiny Community Regeneration, Environment and Health and Well Being Committee	



Is this an Executive Decision:	NO	Is this a Key Decision:	NO
Is this in the Forward Plan:	NO	Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:			

Essential Signatories:

ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE

Monitoring Officer: **Angela Wakefield**

Date Signature

Chief Finance Officer: **Sal Khan**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Cabinet

Date: 16th November 2020

REPORT TITLE: COVID-19 Emergency Planning Update
(November 2020)

PORTFOLIO: Leader of the Council

HEAD OF SERVICE: Sal Khan

CONTACT OFFICER: James Abbott (Corporate & Commercial Manager)
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WARD(S) AFFECTED: Non-Specific

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide senior officers and Members an update on the latest situation and associated response in East Staffordshire by the Council and its partners to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.2. The report includes a backwards looking review of recent response activities considering all relevant aspects of the response including considerations regarding: People & Processes; Service Changes & Communications; Community & Partners; and Finances.
- 1.3. The report also sets out a framework for recovery considering contributions from National, County, Borough and Ward levels.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The Council and its partners continue to act effectively in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic emergency.
- 2.2. The response has been summarised in this report by considering the themes of: People and Processes; Service Changes and Communications; Community and Partners; and Finances.

2.3. It has been necessary for the Council to plan for and react to a range of challenges and pressures that have arisen as a result of the pandemic, however **throughout the response to the COVID-19 situation critical services have continued.**

2.3.1. There has been considerable efforts across these tiers on the recovery phase within East Staffordshire. As the emergency continues to evolve away from “response” into the “recovery” phase, a recovery framework has been developed capturing and overlaying National, County, Borough and Ward level recovery work.

3. Background

3.1. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak of coronavirus disease COVID-19 as a pandemic on 11th March 2020.

3.2. To delay the spread of the virus the Government has made [a range of announcements implementing a range of measures on social distancing](#), and the Council has responded accordingly to ensure the operation of its facilities and services align to the current guidance and / or restrictions.

3.3. By law, category one responders (which includes all local authorities) have duties to plan and prepare for emergencies. Planning for civil emergencies and ensuring continuity of its own services is therefore a fundamental and ongoing element of East Staffordshire Borough Council’s normal operation. The Council has a range of resilience plans in place to mitigate the impact of any emergency incident, for example service specific business continuity plans. It is also part of the Staffordshire Resilience Forum (SRF) which is made up of multiple agencies who work together to plan and prepare for localised incidents and civil emergencies.

3.4. The SRF has facilitated a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) with effect from 10th March 2020 including senior representatives of all relevant responders and partners, for example local authorities, the emergency “blue-light” services, Public Health England, MHCLG, the military, the NHS, local hospitals and Clinical Commissioning Groups. Reporting to the SCG are a number of subgroups co-ordinating the tactical response, each with a focus on specific areas of the response.

3.5. In addition to the SCG the SRF is also facilitating with effect from 24th April 2020 a Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG). This group is working in parallel to the SCG, and will support partners, communities and stakeholders to deliver the recovery activity associated with COVID-19.

4. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

4.1. This report contributes to all three Corporate Priorities as it is relevant to all Council services.

5. COVID-19 Emergency Planning Update (November 2020)

5.1. Response Phase Latest Update

5.1.1. It has been necessary for the Council to plan for and react to a range of challenges and pressures that have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, however **throughout the response to the COVID-19 situation critical services have continued.**

5.1.2. The incident continues to have an impact with “normal” business being affected. However the response is being managed at this time through the activation of local contingency plans and coordinated corrective action. Requests for mutual aid have not been necessary.

5.1.3. The response can be summarised by considering the following themes:

Community and Partners (C&P)	Service Changes and Communications (SC&C)
People and Processes (P&P)	Finances (F)

5.1.4. The following table provides a summary overview of the Council’s direct response to these challenges, with full detail on this response, along with an outlook moving forward, provided in the subsequent sections of this report.

Response Summary

Community and Partners (para 5.1.5)

- On Monday 12th October the Government announced a new three tiered system of local COVID-19 Alert Levels. Staffordshire was initially placed in the “Medium” tier. On Thursday 22nd October a letter was distributed to all businesses and residential properties in the Borough asking for residents and businesses to help avoid stricter formal measures by following additional advice. It was subsequently announced on 27th October that Staffordshire would be moving from the “Medium” alert level into the “High” alert level with effect from 31st October. Furthermore on 31st October Government announced new national restrictions to be implemented with effect from 5th November.
- Burton Town Hall is now the base for a Local Testing Station (LTS) for a period of three months from early October, catering for walk-in symptomatic cases. This must be booked online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus
- The Council invited residents to ‘Remember at Home’ this Remembrance Sunday. In order to comply with Government restrictions this year’s parade has been cancelled, and refocused as a scaled-back, recorded wreath-laying ceremony with invited guests (video accessible on the Council’s website from Monday 9th November).
- On Friday 23rd October 2020 the Council’s Environmental Health Team and partners spent the evening visiting the town centres of Burton and premises near Uttoxeter. The purpose of these visits was to carry out spot checks on a variety of premises to ensure that they were complying with the rules in place at that time. The team found that the vast majority were compliant with most businesses actively managing COVID-19 controls.

People and Processes (para 5.1.7)

- As of 2nd November 2020 the Council has 293 employees including casual staff. The Council has had a total of 54 absences due to employees or their family members/close contacts reporting COVID-19 symptoms. There are 9 current absences for this reason.
- Internal engagement has been undertaken with staff to discuss experiences during “lockdown”, including a short survey circulated within the organisation to assist senior officers tailor the response moving forward. The survey, which ran for a month in the period July-August, gathered colleagues’ thoughts on wellbeing and the challenges of homeworking. Almost 50% of the workforce participated.
- A process for the recruitment and training of COVID Secure Marshals has commenced. Our COVID Marshals will be employed in a customer-facing ambassadorial role that will help residents and visitors with advice on the national guidance on COVID-19, including social distancing and the wearing of face masks where appropriate.
- An initial Covid Marshal presence was active within the Borough from 6th November.

Service Changes and Communications (para 5.1.6)

- The Customer Service Centre in Burton closed from Thursday 5th November 2020. The Customer Service Centre in Uttoxeter remains closed. All enquiries normally dealt with face to face are being managed by telephone, email, through the Council website or post.
- The Indoor Market Hall closed from Thursday 5th November. Cafés and take away establishments will remain open for takeaways only. A small selection of shops will be available outdoors for collection and delivery in line with Government guidelines.
- The Brewhouse closed from Thursday 5th November. All events and activities scheduled within this period are being cancelled and everyone who has booked a ticket will be contacted.
- The Greenhouse and Horticultural Centre, all outdoor sports facilities such as basketball, tennis courts and outdoor gym facilities are closed. Parks, including children’s play areas will remain open.
- Everyone Active closed the 3 leisure centres at the end of normal operational hours on Wednesday 4th November.
- A “Shop Safe” campaign is to be undertaken focussing on supporting takeaway and delivery businesses in November, shifting to supporting businesses to re-open in December working with the Chamber of Commerce.
- Signage and safety messaging has been renewed and extended to Neighbourhood shopping areas in larger villages to assist with messaging during this second period of restrictions.

Finances (para 5.1.8)

- The Council (as of 4th November) has:
 - Awarded £255,323 worth of Nursery Discount Relief to 21 Nurseries.
 - Awarded £20.33m worth of Expanded Retail Discount Relief to 808 business ratepayers
 - Paid a total of £439,648 in Council Tax Hardship Fund payments to 2,889 working age Council Tax Reduction claimants.
 - Issued 1,985 Small Business and Retail, Hospitality & Leisure grants totalling £23.36m to local ratepayers.
 - Paid a total of £1,200,000 in Discretionary Grants to 120 businesses.
 - Paid £29,500 in Test and Trace Support Payments to 59 successful applicants; 30 under the main scheme and 29 under the discretionary scheme.
- The Government has recently announced Local Restrictions Support Grant schemes with East Staffordshire being allocated a total of £4,526,411 to support local businesses.
- East Staffordshire has been allocated £58,490 funding to help support compliance and enforcement of COVID-19 rules.
- The Brewhouse Arts Centre has been awarded £51,565 as part of the Government’s £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund grants programme being administered by Arts Council England.
- The Council has currently been allocated £1.893m of Central government support following the allocations of the fourth tranche of COVID-19 funding (£443,243) announced on 22nd October.

5.1.5. Community and Partners

5.1.5.1. On Monday 12th October the Government announced a [new three tiered system of local COVID-19 Alert Levels](#). Staffordshire was initially placed in the “Medium” tier.

5.1.5.2. All boroughs and districts in Staffordshire continued to see their COVID cases rising quickly. On Thursday 22nd October a letter was distributed to all businesses and residential properties in the Borough asking for residents and businesses to help avoid stricter formal measures by following some additional advice below:

i) Meeting Friends and Family: This is the time of year, as we approach half term, Halloween and Bonfire Night, where family and friends come together to socialise and celebrate. The evidence we are seeing is that most cases of COVID-19 are being spread via household contact. So, at this time, we are strongly advising people to avoid mixing indoors with other households for social purposes wherever possible. This advice would not affect households currently in a bubble. You should seek to avoid visiting friends or family in care homes, other than in exceptional circumstances.

ii) Going to Work and Travelling: You can continue to travel in and out of your local area for work - but if you can work at home, you should do so. If you do return to your workplace, your employer must make arrangements for you to work safely. You can still go on holiday outside of your local area, but you should only do this with people in your household or support bubble and are advised against going to an area that has been designated with a Very High level of coronavirus infection.

iii) Schools, Colleges and Universities: Nurseries, schools, colleges and universities in Staffordshire remain open. They have all worked incredibly hard and carried out COVID-19 assessments to ensure pupils can attend safely. We are advising parents and pupils to avoid any unnecessary mixing outside schools during drop-off or collection times, and to strictly adhere to social distancing requirements.

iv) Leisure Time: All leisure and entertainment venues including restaurants and pubs can offer table service only, and must close between 10pm and 5am. Takeaway orders can be made at a counter or bar. Unless you have an exemption, you must wear a face covering except when eating or drinking. You should not attend non-professional sporting events as a spectator.

v) Shopping: Shops are allowed to open. You must by law wear a face covering in shops, supermarkets and shopping centres.

vi) Places of Worship, Weddings and Funerals: Weddings and civil partnership ceremonies are limited to 15 people. Funerals are limited to 30 people. Places of Worship remain open for Communal worship in a COVID secure manner, including prayers, devotions or meditations but

people must not mix in a group of more than six people, other than with members of their household or support bubble.

5.1.5.3. The advice circulated as shown Paragraph 5.1.7.2 has now been superseded as it was subsequently announced on 27th October 2020 that Staffordshire would shortly be moving from the “Medium” alert level into the “High” alert level with effect from 31st October 2020. Furthermore on 31st October 2020 Government announced new [national restrictions](#) to be implemented with effect from 5th November 2020 (*N.B. service impacts as a result of the new national restrictions are detailed in Section 5.1.6*).

5.1.5.4. As part of the ongoing COVID-19 response, the main Town Hall (Civic Function Suite side of the building) is now the base for a Local Testing Station (LTS). The site has been surveyed and approved by the Department of Health and Social Care for this purpose. Testing began on Tuesday 6th October and will remain on site for a period of three months, catering for ‘walk in’ symptomatic cases and be self-contained with demarcated entrances and exits. The main Town Hall staff entrance will be unaffected. This must be booked online at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

5.1.5.5. The Council invited residents to ‘Remember at Home’ this Remembrance Sunday. In order to comply with Government restrictions this year’s parade has been cancelled, and refocused as a scaled-back, recorded wreath-laying ceremony with invited guests (video accessible on the Council’s website from Monday 9th November).

5.1.5.6. On Friday 23rd October 2020 the Council’s Environmental Health Team and partners spent the evening visiting Burton town centre and licensed premises near Uttoxeter. The purpose of these visits was to carry out spot checks on a variety of pubs and restaurants to ensure that they were complying with COVID-secure and social distancing rules in place at that time. The team found that the vast majority were compliant with most businesses actively managing COVID-19 controls. In a few minor cases there were a small number of concerns identified. These were primarily with regards staff members and/or customers not wearing face coverings. This information will be shared with the police as part of our partnership working to ensure appropriate compliance levels are maintained. Spot checks will continue to be made moving forwards, and the team continue to respond to any complaints, enquiries, outbreaks etc on an ongoing basis.

5.1.6. Service Changes and Communications

5.1.6.1. A number of enforced changes following direct instruction issued by Government have been necessary, as well as the Council also implementing a number of service changes to effectively respond to the emergency at a local level. However throughout the response to the COVID-19 situation, critical services have continued.

5.1.6.2. Following the Government announcement on 31st October 2020 that further restrictions were to be implemented with effect from 5th November 2020, a number of service changes have been required, as detailed below:

Facility	Service Impact
Customer Service Centres (CSCs) in Burton and Uttoxeter	The Customer Service Centre in Burton closed from Thursday 5 th November 2020. The Customer Service Centre in Uttoxeter remains closed. All enquiries normally dealt with face to face are being managed by telephone, email, through the Council website or post.
Burton Market Hall and Outdoor Market	The Indoor Market Hall closed from Thursday 5 th November. Cafés and take away establishments will remain open for takeaways only. A small selection of shops will be available outdoors for collection and delivery in line with Government guidelines
Brewhouse Arts Centre	The Brewhouse closed from Thursday 5 th November. All events and activities scheduled within this period are being cancelled and everyone who has booked a ticket will be contacted.
Open Spaces	The Greenhouse and Horticultural Centre, all outdoor sports facilities such as basketball, tennis courts and outdoor gym facilities are closed. Parks, including children's play areas will remain open.
Council Leisure Facilities (Meadowside Leisure Centre, Uttoxeter Leisure Centre and Shobnall Leisure Complex), run by Everyone Active	Everyone Active closed the 3 leisure centres at the end of normal operational hours on Wednesday 4 th November.

5.1.6.3. There is ongoing communications in relation to service changes and related messaging. As well its own messages, the Council has continued to share key communications from other partner organisations, ensuring these important messages are shared as widely as possible. Communications campaigns continue to adapt to reflect changing government guidance.

5.1.6.4. The Environmental Health Team have undertaken increased communications with takeaway premises within the Borough to assist with their compliance with guidance and restrictions.

5.1.6.5. A new 'Shop Safe Shop Local' campaign supporting Reopening High Streets Safely was to be launched in the lead up to Christmas with an expected increase in visitors to the town during November and December. This campaign is to be refocused on supporting takeaway and delivery businesses in November, and will then shift to supporting businesses to re-open in December working with the Chamber of Commerce.

5.1.6.6. Signage and safety messaging has been renewed and extended to Neighbourhood shopping areas in larger villages to assist with messaging during this second period of restrictions.

5.1.7. People and Processes

5.1.7.1. As of 2nd November 2020 the Council has 293 employees including casual staff. The Council has had a total of 54 absences due to employees or their family members/close contacts reporting COVID-19 symptoms. There are 9 current absences for this reason.

5.1.7.2. Internal engagement has been undertaken with staff to discuss experiences during “lockdown”, including a short survey circulated within the organisation to assist senior officers tailor the response moving forward. The survey, which ran for a month in the period July-August, gathered colleagues’ thoughts on wellbeing and the challenges of homeworking with a view at that time for an imminent return to the office in some capacity. As guidance on social distancing and associated measures continue to change, the insights from the survey can be revisited accordingly and used as necessary in relation to an eventual return to the office when appropriate. In the meantime, we have tried to link staff together who may be experiencing issues, such as living and working alone and have also ordered web-cams for staff who didn’t previously have that facility so that they can hold face-face meetings (for example team meetings, or meetings with line managers) more frequently.

5.1.7.3. Almost 50% of the workforce participated in the survey and a high level summary of the responses can be seen below:

Workforce Survey Results

Homeworking During the Pandemic
79% agreed they have access to all the resources/hardware and 90% agreed they have access to all the necessary ICT software
68% agreed on a better work-life balance and 64% declared WFH did not add more pressure due to additional circumstances
86% would consider WFH if it was an option for them in the future
89% felt informed throughout the staff briefing and 97% know where to find updated policies or whom to talk to regarding H&S and wellbeing
88% confirmed their manager is accessible and in contact and 85% felt they can rely on their manager for support
78% felt their job is reasonably secure in these times
The biggest challenge of homeworking: Disconnectedness & isolation (41%), closely followed by switching off after work (33%)
The biggest advantage of homeworking: No commuting time & expense (77%), closely followed by the ability to work more flexible hours (65%)
Wellbeing
90% of colleagues rated their current state of wellbeing around the top half of the scale (‘1 to 10’, where 1 is ‘not well at all’)
Sleep problems (48%) and aches/pain in neck, shoulders and back (46%) were pointed as the top two examples of physical strain experienced. Staff have received intervention and support from HR and Health and Safety in response to these issues.
Changes in behaviour: lower activity levels (44%), less healthy eating habits (36%), long or irregular working hours (22%), increased alcohol consumption (11%).

5.1.7.4. A process for the recruitment and training of COVID Secure Marshals has commenced. Our COVID Marshals will be employed in a customer-facing ambassadorial role that will help residents and visitors with advice on the national guidance on COVID-19, including social distancing and the wearing of face masks where appropriate. The Marshals will provide a visible presence on the streets of East Staffordshire and activities will include identifying locations that make social distancing difficult, cleaning regular touch points and highlighting breaches of the regulations to the appropriate enforcement authority. An initial COVID Marshal presence was active within the Borough from 6th November.

5.1.8. Finances

5.1.8.1. The Council (as of 4th November) has:

- Awarded £255,323 worth of Nursery Discount Relief to 21 Nurseries.
- Awarded £20.33m worth of Expanded Retail Discount Relief to 808 business ratepayers
- Paid a total of £439,648 in Council Tax Hardship Fund payments to 2,889 working age Council Tax Reduction claimants.
- Issued 1,985 Small Business and Retail, Hospitality & Leisure grants totalling £23.36m to local ratepayers.
- Paid a total of £1,200,000 in Discretionary Grants to 120 businesses.

5.1.8.2. On 12th October the Council implemented an application process for [Test and Trace Support Payments](#). Eligible individuals are entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary support payment of £500. This is to support people on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace and will lose income as a result. These payments are designed to help ensure people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts self-isolate for the required period to stop the onward spread of the virus. They are also designed to encourage individuals who are eligible for this payment to get tested if they have symptoms. This is important to help stop the transmission of COVID-19 and avoid further economic and societal restrictions. As of 4th November we have paid £29,500 in Test and Trace Support Payments to 59 successful applicants; 30 under the main scheme and 29 under the discretionary scheme.

5.1.8.3. The Government has recently announced Local Restrictions Support Grant schemes with East Staffordshire initially being allocated a total of £4,526,411 to support local businesses during the national lockdown and during periods of local restrictions. The “Local Restrictions Support Grant (closed) Addendum” scheme is a mandatory scheme which went live on 11th November 2020. Letters were issued to all businesses identified as eligible for the grant inviting them to complete an online application. The “Additional Restriction Grant” scheme is a discretionary scheme and options are being considered for the eligibility criteria and grant award to be offered. Once confirmed an online application process will also be implemented.

- 5.1.8.4. The Government has confirmed councils and the police will equally share the extra [£60 million in funding to help support compliance and enforcement of COVID-19 rules](#). East Staffordshire has been allocated £58,490.
- 5.1.8.5. The Brewhouse Arts Centre has been awarded £51,565 as part of the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund grants programme being administered by Arts Council England on behalf of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to help face the challenges of the pandemic.
- 5.1.8.6. The Council is facing significant financial pressures as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. These pressures not only include additional costs but also more significantly a reduction to the income levels the Council receives that are used to ensure that funding is available to provide essential services to residents. Central Government has announced several packages of support for local government to help respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Council has currently been allocated £1.893m following the allocations of the fourth tranche of COVID-19 funding (£443,243) announced on 22nd October.
- 5.1.8.7. The package of support for local government as a whole announced in July provides some additional direct funding to support cost pressures and a scheme of protection against some service income losses. It has also been announced that local authorities will be allowed to spread over three years losses associated with business rates and council tax, and the regulations for this have recently been published.
- 5.1.8.8. The impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy will be extensive and this is being monitored and updated on a regular basis to reflect the most recent information, with the Quarter 1 forecast position presented to Cabinet during September. The Council's underlying financial position is robust and this provides a strong foundation of financial resilience during these unprecedented circumstances.

5.2. **A Framework for Recovery**

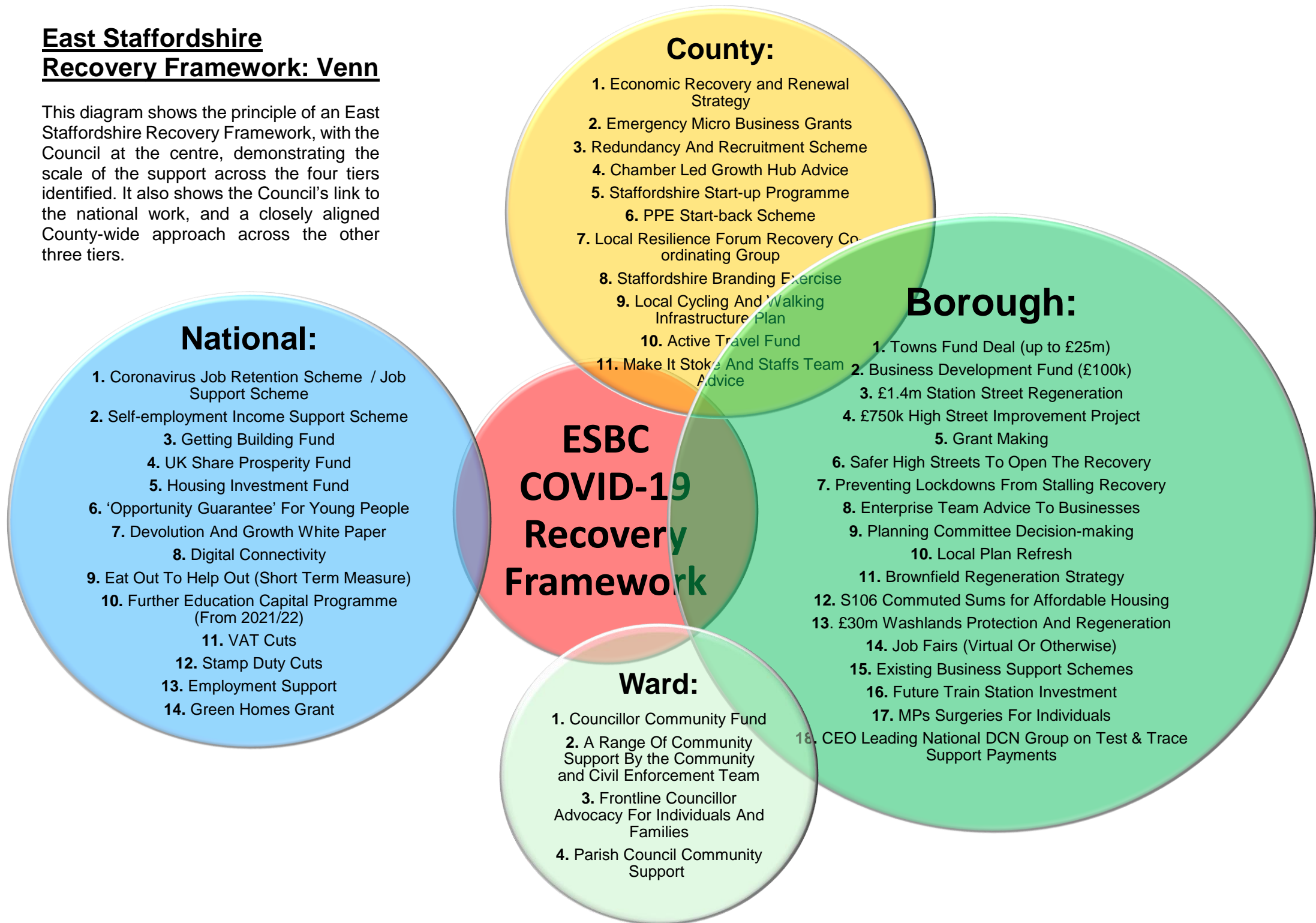
5.2.1. A civil emergency can be considered in two distinct phases. “Response” encompasses the actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of an emergency, whereas “Recovery” is the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating following an emergency.

5.2.2. As the emergency continues to evolve away from “response” into the “recovery” phase, a recovery framework has been developed capturing and overlaying National, County, Borough and Ward level recovery work.

5.2.3. There has been considerable efforts across these tiers on the recovery phase within East Staffordshire. The illustration below sets this out in summary, demonstrating the scope of recovery work.

East Staffordshire Recovery Framework: Venn

This diagram shows the principle of an East Staffordshire Recovery Framework, with the Council at the centre, demonstrating the scale of the support across the four tiers identified. It also shows the Council's link to the national work, and a closely aligned County-wide approach across the other three tiers.



5.2.4. There has been a number of initiatives implemented by Central Government on a national basis which contribute to the recovery from the COVID-19 emergency.

5.2.5. This includes a range of schemes for businesses; opportunities for young people; schemes relating to education and employment; support for homeowners; and temporary changes in taxation (VAT and Stamp Duty).

5.2.6. Information on Government schemes and associated guidance can be accessed via <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

5.2.7. The Council continues to support the communication of Government schemes to residents and businesses within the Borough through an ongoing information campaign via its usual communication channels, such as its social media channels and [website](#).

5.2.8. However it is important to note that there has been significant work within East Staffordshire and the County, in addition to the Council's localised support to the national recovery work. This is detailed fully below with reference to which of the balanced scorecard themes the item primarily contributes to (noting that items may in practice cut across multiple themes):

East Staffordshire Borough Council COVID-19 Recovery Framework

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
County Level		
1. Staffordshire Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a five year strategy aimed at responding to COVID-19 and setting out the County's ambitions for the economic recovery of Staffordshire. It aims include developing and implementing plans to mitigate against COVID-19 impacts; develop plans to refresh and reinstate delivery programmes across the themes of business environment, people, place, infrastructure and ideas; develop plans for new programmes that will support the recovery, renewal and transformation of the local economy. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
2. SCC Emergency Micro Business Grants Scheme (£500k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This grant fund has now been fully implemented. • This fund launched in April and was targeted at micro businesses that were not eligible for the other forms of Government grant support. 	F
3. SCC Redundancy And Recruitment Scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countywide Redundancy Task Group • Redundancy and Recruitment Triage Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Countywide Redundancy Task Group is an operational partnership that was established in June 2020 and aims to improve collaboration and support in responding to redundancy announcements across the County. This shifts the approach from a case-by-case response to a more co-ordinated, consistent response. • The Redundancy and Recruitment Triage Service is free, responsive support offered to businesses who are looking to restructure and to individuals who are at risk of or have been made redundant. This is delivered through the National Careers Service. • 33 businesses across Staffordshire have accessed this service 	P&P
4. Chamber Led Growth Hub Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses are able to access support through either the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Hub or the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Growth Hub. • The Growth Hubs offer wide ranging support and advise to businesses generally and this has also been tailored to respond to COVID-19 related enquiries. • The Council's Growth Hub Advisor will be supporting at least 20 businesses throughout the year 	C&P
5. Staffordshire Start-up Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a support programme for people with ambitions to set up their own business and whose existing employment may be at risk due to COVID-19. • This is a three year programme aiming to support 200 new start-ups a year, delivered through the Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
6. SCC PPE Start-back Scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This scheme has now been fully implemented. • This scheme supported micro businesses looking to re-open safely by providing free PPE equipment packs for 2,000 businesses. 	C&P
7. Local Resilience Forum Recovery Co-ordinating Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Resilience Forum continues to facilitate (with effect from 24th April 2020) a Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG). • Attended by the Council's CEO the RCG supports partners, communities and stakeholders to deliver the recovery activity associated with COVID-19. 	P&P
8. Staffordshire Branding Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffordshire County Council has commissioned place marketing experts ThinkingPlace to conduct detailed research and engagement on the 'place branding' for Staffordshire. • This work is aimed to collate views from the public and private sectors to create a brand for Staffordshire that will encourage inward investment and growth in the County. • This is in the process of being reported to the County Council. 	SC&C
9. Local Cycling And Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being considered in the Stronger Towns work is a number of improvements to Burton's cycling network, bringing forward the majority of the short and medium term proposals in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. • The LCWIP sets out a number of potential improvements to Burton's cycling network that could encourage better connectivity within and around the town, and have associated health and wellbeing benefits. The plan is currently being consulted upon. • This is being proposed for inclusion in the Town Investment Plan. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
10. Active Travel Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Government announced in May an emergency active travel fund, with Staffordshire County Council receiving an allocation. SCC are planning improvements in line with their Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan. 	C&P
11. Make It Stoke And Staffs Team Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Make it Stoke and Staffs team provide business support and advice on relocations and new premises within the County. The team provides advice to those looking to invest in terms of key development sites and commercial property and can provide information on local workforces and economies. 	C&P
Borough Level		
1. Towns Fund Deal (up to £25m)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Burton upon Trent has been selected as one of 100 towns that could benefit from up to £25m in a 5 year grant funding programme aimed at levelling up the town. The funding bid will be made through the Town Investment Plan, to be submitted in December 2020, which will need to take into account the local impact of COVID-19 in proposing interventions that could aid recovery. Potential interventions include the creation of a new pedestrian bridge across the Trent, improvements to road junctions, enhancements in the cycling network, investment in the local education provision, and more. Consultation ran until 11th October, with around 900 responses. Responses will be considered by the Town Deal Board. Members of the public were able to provide feedback and comments on the town's proposals for projects to be funded by the Government's Towns Fund programme. In order to support the development of the Town Investment Plan, the Town Deal Board is seeking the views of the residents, businesses, and visitors of Burton on the longlist of proposed interventions. The public feedback will help the Town Deal Board in shortlisting proposals and prioritising which should be taken forward in the Town Investment Plan. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
2. Business Development Fund (£100k)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to March 2019, it was intended that this £100k fund would be implemented in the spring of 2020 aimed at growing micro and small businesses. With the impact of COVID-19 and availability of Government support schemes, this was held back. • It is currently intended that the scheme is implemented in early 2021 and is tailored around economic recovery and growth of small businesses, with a particular focus on the safeguarding and creation of jobs. • As part of the process, businesses are required to present their application to a panel. Panel membership is to be confirmed shortly, but it is anticipated this will be made up of Council Members, officers and local business leaders, with the panel meetings being conducted in a virtual setting. 	F
3. £1.4m Station Street Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project began shortly before the lockdown in March 2020 and has continued to be delivered throughout this period, largely uninterrupted. • This project has now completed, subject to snagging and defects. The transformation of Station Street will create a much more attractive town centre public realm with more appropriate facilities for the neighbouring businesses. The delivery of the project will encourage footfall in the town centre. 	C&P
4. £750k High Street Improvement Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council submitted a grant application for Government to utilise an early release of the Towns Fund to continue the Station Street project onto High Street, delivering improvements between Station Street and Market Place. • The application was for £750k and has now been approved and Staffordshire County Council are exploring opportunities to add value to the project through additional investment. • The project is likely to commence in early 2021 and will be delivered by SCC's delivery partner, Amey. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
5. Grant Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council plays a fundamental role in administering a range of grants and funds that contribute to recovery within the area. These include the Local Authority Discretionary Grant Fund; Small Business Grant Fund; Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Funding which have been implemented. 	F
6. Safer High Streets To Open The Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council in conjunction with local partners, has facilitated the safe reopening of the Town Centres on 15th June and aids the recovery of the area following the closures. A range of measures have been installed to ensure that residents and retailers can use key shopping areas safely and give confidence to residents and visitors to the area. A new 'Shop Safe Shop Local' campaign supporting Reopening High Streets Safely will be launched in the lead up to Christmas as an expected increase in visitors to the town during November and December 2020. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
<p>7. Preventing Lockdowns From Stalling Recovery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will continue to work with its partners on preparedness for and prevention of future lockdowns to mitigate the impact on the ongoing recovery of the area, as well as ensuring the recovery process continues should a lockdown occur. The Council continues to take an active role in the strategic response and recovery coordinating groups facilitated through the LRF with its partners. • At a local level the Council will continue to work with SCC, ward members, community leaders etc to reinforce the key messages and develop strategies around social distancing, testing and isolation building on the recent experiences from the engagement within the Anglesey and Shobnall area. • The Environmental Health Team will continue to work with partners to ensure compliance with COVID-19 safety measures and to support the investigation of any outbreaks identified. • The Council will work to support businesses attempt to continue to operate as appropriate during any potential future lockdown to mitigate the impact on the ongoing recovery process, including support relating to any relevant government business grants mitigating the impact of additional restrictions on impacted sectors that may be available. 	<p>SC&C</p>

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
<p>8. Enterprise Team Advice To Businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice and support continue to be provided to local businesses through the ongoing activities of the Enterprise Team. • In recent months, this has been tailored to providing advice around responding to COVID-19 and helping businesses to access the relevant support and funding through the appropriate organisations and internal teams (such as Business Rates). • Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the Enterprise Team have continued to have a steady flow of enquiries from local people starting up in business. The Enterprise Team are able to direct them on to the Enterprise for Success scheme which is free to access and businesses also have the option to apply for a small grant once they have completed the programme. • The Team have also continued to support the GBSLEP Business Growth Scheme which offers grants from £10,000 through reviewing applications and remotely attending panel meetings. • SME re-start grants opened through the GBSLEP Growth Hub on 30th September for applications from businesses across East Staffordshire, and are due to close on 9th October. The small grants will be £1,000 - £3,000. Eligible businesses will be able to apply for grants to help them access new technology and other equipment as well as professional, legal, financial or other advice to help them get back on track. Information on eligibility and how to apply is available from https://www.gbslepgrowthhub.co.uk/sme-restart-grant or by calling the helpline on 0800 032 3488 	<p>C&P</p>

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
9. Planning Committee Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Committee Decision-making continues to be a vital element in sustaining the economic recovery and development of the Borough while protecting and improving the quality of the environment. • The Council's Planning function will continue to manage development in accordance with the Local Plan while keeping abreast with any changes to planning regulations. It will also continue to review and assess the scheme of delegation to ensure that it enables speedy decision making. 	P&P
10. Local Plan Refresh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a corporate target to review its Local Plan by October 2020. This review will assess whether there is a need to update the Local Plan. • The review considers a number of factors to determine whether an update is required. An integral factor is whether the Local Plan provide a suitable planning framework which enables sustainable economic growth. 	P&P
11. Brownfield Regeneration Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The primary objective of this strategy is to promote the development of existing brownfield land and infill development sites within the Borough. • Through this strategy, the Council works with developers and landowners to enable and facilitate the redevelopment of previously used land, supporting the regeneration of sites on the Council's brownfield register. • Brownfield land is most commonly found within local centres and so working with developers to bring these forward will not only stimulate the local economy, but it will also create more opportunities for investment as the towns and local centres recover from COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to institutionalise longer term homeworking, which will in turn reduce local office and commercial spaces, increasing the need for the redevelopment of brownfield land before they become derelict. • The Council will be looking at whether the Brownfield Regeneration Strategy requires a refresh during 2021. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
<p>12. S106 Commuted Sums for Affordable Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over a number of years, the Council has collected commuted sums for affordable housing through S106 agreements in lieu of developers providing affordable housing on site. Following the objective of the Brownfield Regeneration Strategy, the Council utilises this ring-fenced funding by meeting development viability gaps in order to facilitate the redevelopment of brownfield land to deliver appropriate affordable housing. Brownfield land is typically harder and more expensive to develop due to the cost of remediating the sites of barriers such as existing structures or land contamination. COVID-19 has impacted developers locally insofar as that housebuilding is currently taking longer, due to social distancing requirements, and there is increased difficulty in sourcing materials. As such, funding viability gaps are likely to increase, making the utilisation of S106 commuted sums all the more crucial in delivering affordable housing locally. 	<p>C&P</p>
<p>13. £30m Washlands Protection And Regeneration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has worked closely with the Environment Agency to support the delivery of improvements to Burton's flood defences, including working together to secure LEP grant funding. This includes working with the EA to deliver the Washlands Enhancement Project that will see the Washlands area between Bargates and the Market Place transformed into an attractive, natural public realm space. The flood defence works are on programme to complete by March 2021, with the environmental enhancement work commencing later in 2021 and completing in 2022. 	<p>C&P</p>
<p>14. Job Fairs (Virtual Or Otherwise)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council through its Enterprise Team will continue to promote local job opportunities, and delivering job fairs remains a corporate plan objective. Working with the Worklessness Action Group, a virtual jobs fair has already been delivered on 18th August. This approach will be reviewed to see how this can be conducted in the coming months to support local businesses and those searching for employment. 	<p>P&P</p>

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
15. Existing Business Support Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of national business funding and support schemes that were available before COVID-19 can still be accessed by businesses and residents. • The Enterprise Team will continue to promote schemes such as the Enterprise for Success support programme and the Business Growth Programme. 	C&P
16. Future Train Station Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Midlands Railway will be investing in Burton and Uttoxeter train stations, looking at initiatives such as enhancing car parking provisions, LED lighting improvements, zero carbon at Uttoxeter station, and cycle schemes. • The Campaign for the Reopening of the Ivanhoe Line are continuing to work with the Department for Transport to investigate the feasibility of reopening the train line that would connect Burton with Leicester, through South Derbyshire. 	C&P
17. MPs Surgeries For Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local MPs for East Staffordshire are available for residents and businesses to discuss any COVID-19 recovery issues they have, which can then be raised with the Council or relevant partner as necessary. 	P&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
18. CEO Leading National DCN Group on Test & Trace Support Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's CEO has been leading a national District Council Network group on 'Test & Trace Support Payments' to help establish a smooth roll out of this new payments system across district areas. On 12th October the Council implemented the application process for Test and Trace Support Payments in East Staffordshire. Eligible individuals are entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment or discretionary support payment of £500. 	F
Ward Level		
1. Councillor Community Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April, the Council's Councillor Community Fund (CCF) re-opened for new applications. Ward Councillors are encouraged to continue to make use of the CCF to support community groups and organisations who are providing assistance to residents during these difficult times. 	F
2. A Range Of Community Support By the Community and Civil Enforcement Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of ward level community support will continue to be provided by the Community and Civil Enforcement Officers. This includes the delivery of Corporate target EHWB20 "Undertake 8 focused initiatives (including fly tipping) across the Borough and deliver at least 6 education programs in local schools", which can be refocused to incorporate COVID-19 related issues 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
<p>3. Frontline Councillor Advocacy For Individuals And Families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough Councillor Representation • County Councillor Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a specific role for councillors in the Council's work leading and supporting communities as we move through the process of response and into recover. • The Local Government Association have produced a detailed guidance document entitled COVID-19 Outbreak: Reset and Recovery to aid local councillors in their frontline community role. 	<p>P&P</p>
<p>4. Parish Council Community Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Councils provide a local level point of contact for support to the communities in East Staffordshire. • Residents can raise concerns with their Parish Councils, who can in turn provide advice or raise queries with the Borough and / or County Councils where necessary. 	<p>C&P</p>

6. Financial Considerations

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: **Lisa Turner***

6.1. The main financial issues arising from this Report are as follows:

6.1.1. The financial position of the Council and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this position are not specifically considered within this report.

6.1.2. The Council, like all local authorities, is facing significant financial pressures due to COVID-19. These pressures not only include additional costs but also more significantly a reduction to the income levels the Council receives which are used to provide essential services to residents. The impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy will be extensive and this is being monitored and updated on a regular basis to reflect the most recent information. The Council's underlying financial position is robust and this provides a strong foundation of financial resilience during these unprecedented circumstances.

6.2. The financial issues directly arising from this report are as detailed in Section 5.1.8.

7. Risk Assessment and Management

7.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

7.1.1. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

7.1.1.1. Sharing information across officer and Member portfolios on the current situation with Council facilities and services allows for a joined up overview of the response to challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 emergency.

7.1.2. **Negative** (Threats):

7.1.2.1. The situation and data relating to the response is constantly developing. It should be noted that where data is presented the associated dates for the validity of that data will be provided in this report.

7.2. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

8. Legal Considerations

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team: **Angela Wakefield***

8.1. There are no significant legal issues arising from this Report.

9. Equalities and Health

- 9.1. **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.
- 9.2. **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

10. Human Rights

- 10.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

11. Sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)

- 11.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) **N/A**

12. Recommendation(s)

- 12.1. To note the update detailed within the report.

13. Background Papers

- 13.1. None

14. Appendices

- 14.1. None