



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	COVID-19 Emergency Planning Update (May 2021)	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team: 16th March 2021	X
	Leader and Deputy Leaders: 19th April 2021	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group / Independent Alliance Advisory Group: 28th / 29th April 2021	X
	Cabinet: 10th May 2021	
	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: 10th May 2021

**REPORT TITLE: COVID-19 Emergency Planning Update
(May 2021)**

PORTFOLIO: Leader of the Council

HEAD OF SERVICE: Sal Khan

**CONTACT OFFICER: James Abbott (Corporate & Commercial Manager)
Ext. No. x1244**

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. In addition to the ongoing response work, 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 (May 2021)**

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.**

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

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:

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)

- It was announced on 4th January 2021 that the UK would go into another national “lockdown”. From 8th March, people in England saw restrictions start to lift via the Government’s four-step roadmap.
- The national testing site for people with Covid symptoms at Burton Town Hall moved to the Library Car Park on Saturday 10th April whilst the Town Hall is being used for the local elections.
- Residents are being encouraged to book a COVID test twice a week even if they have no symptoms. There is a network of Community Testing Centres and Testing Pop-Ups across Staffordshire
- The NHS in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent continues to roll out COVID-19 vaccines. The Council has supported communications campaigns regarding vaccinations, including information to tackle myths and misinformation. Local Authorities and local Clinical Commissioning Groups are working closely with local communities to ensure as many eligible people as possible take up the offer of a vaccine. In a bid to increase vaccination take up in Burton’s four areas of interest, a pop up vaccination clinic took place on Friday 5th March at the community centre at Central Jamia Mosque Rizvia.

People and Processes (para 5.1.7)

- As of 27th April 2021 the Council has 286 employees including casual staff. The Council has had a total of 100 absences due to employees or their family members / close contacts reporting COVID-19 symptoms, with no new absences reported in the preceding week and no people currently absent. The Council has maintained no COVID-19 absences for 2 continuous weeks.
- A further staff survey will explore current staff experiences of homeworking during the latest lockdown, and their views in regard to returning to the Council’s work-based premises in the months ahead.
- A cross-government Regulatory Services Task and Finish Group has prioritised regulatory services activities to help support local authority decision-making during the response to coronavirus. The Council’s Environmental Health team will continue to focus on COVID work and other high priority areas as identified by the group.
- The Council has implemented a Noise App to assist with the investigation of noise complaints, reducing the need for officers to visit complainants’ properties to install noise monitoring equipment.
- An initial COVID Marshal presence was active within the Borough from 6th November. Our COVID Marshals are 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.
- A parks working group has been established with key agencies to co-ordinate activity and communication, and encourage the safe, healthy and active use of open spaces.

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.
- Burton Market Hall reopened on Monday 12th April.
- The Brewhouse will be partially re-opening for activities permitted under current restrictions from w/c 26th April with the aim (Government roadmap permitting) to open to the public fully from w/c 24th May. The Brewhouse and Arts team have delivered a series of online holiday activities and ‘virtual’ projects during the temporary closure of the building (since 1 November 2020) and will be continuing some of this remote delivery as well as developing a series of outreach events across the Summer to encourage audiences back to The Brewhouse in a COVID secure way.
- All outdoor sports facilities, outdoor gym facilities, parks and children’s play areas are open in accordance with COVID-19 restrictions.
- Everyone Active reopened Shobnall Leisure Complex on 29th March 2021, and Meadowside and Uttoxeter Leisure Centres on 12th April 2021.
- The Council is encouraging residents to ‘Stay Local’ in its latest campaign to support businesses in the Borough. The ‘Stay Local’ campaign, which features a range of local business owners, is designed to promote Burton and Uttoxeter town centres, as well as other high streets and shopping areas across East Staffordshire, whilst reminding residents to continue to shop safely.

Finances (para 5.1.8)

- The Council (as of 23rd April 2021) has awarded:
 - £38,458,311.15 in Business Rate Reliefs to 857 recipients
 - £16,119,951.76 in Business Support Grants to 5561 recipients
 - £799,922.66 in Council Tax Hardship Fund payments to 3447 recipients
 - £339,500.00 in Test and Trace Support Payments to 679 recipients (see para 5.1.8.2 for a further breakdown)
- 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.
- The Council had recently made an application to the National Leisure Recovery Fund (NLRF) for a grant to support its Leisure Operating Contract with Everyone Active, and the Council has now been advised that we have been awarded £236,173.
- In March 2021 the Government have announced £56m of funding for local authorities to support the safe and successful reopening of high streets. East Staffordshire have been allocated £106,046.
- The Department of Health and Social Care have set out funding of £400m for 2021/22 in relation to the Contain Outbreaks Management Fund. East Staffordshire has been provided with an indicative allocation of £166,496.

5.1.5. Community and Partners

5.1.5.1. It was announced on 4th January 2021 that the UK would go into another national “lockdown”.

5.1.5.2. From 8th March, people in England saw these restrictions start to lift via the Government’s [four-step roadmap](#), summarised as below:

STEP 1 8 March	STEP 2 No earlier than 12 April
29 March	At least 5 weeks after Step 1
EDUCATION 8 MARCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and colleges open for all students Practical Higher Education courses 	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As previous step
SOCIAL CONTACT 8 MARCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise and recreation outdoors with household or one other person Household only indoors 	SOCIAL CONTACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule of 6 or two households outdoors Household only indoors
BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES 8 MARCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wraparound care, including sport, for all children 	BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All retail Personal care Libraries & community centres Most outdoor attractions Indoor leisure inc. gyms (individual use only) Self-contained accommodation All children’s activities Outdoor hospitality Indoor parent & child groups (max 15 people, excluding under 5s)
TRAVEL 8 MARCH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay at home No holidays 	TRAVEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays (household only) No international holidays
EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funerals (30) Weddings and wakes (6) 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funerals (30) Weddings, wakes, receptions (15) Event pilots

STEP 3 No earlier than 17 May	STEP 4 No earlier than 21 June
At least 5 weeks after Step 2	At least 5 weeks after Step 3 All subject to review
EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As previous step 	EDUCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As previous step
SOCIAL CONTACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum 30 people outdoors Rule of 6 or two households indoors (subject to review) 	SOCIAL CONTACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legal limit
BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor hospitality Indoor entertainment and attractions Organised indoor sport (adult) Remaining accommodation Remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances) 	BUSINESS & ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining businesses, including nightclubs
TRAVEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays International travel (subject to review) 	TRAVEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic overnight stays International travel
EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most significant life events (30) Indoor events: 1,000 or 50% (plus pilots) Outdoor seated events: 10,000 or 25% (plus pilots) Outdoor other events: 4,000 or 50% (plus pilots) 	EVENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legal limit on life events Larger events

5.1.5.3. The restrictions and guidance in place throughout the roadmap stages has led to a number of service changes as summarised in paragraph 5.1.6.2.

5.1.5.4. The following provides further information on the [latest national restrictions](#).

5.1.5.5. The national testing site for people with Covid symptoms at Burton Town Hall moved to the Library Car Park on Saturday 10th April whilst the Town Hall is being used for the local elections. The national testing site will switch from a walk-thru to a drive-thru site (people should enter through the Meadowside Leisure Centre side). Walk-ins are welcome and people will also be able to collect kits for home use after their test.

5.1.5.6. Residents are being encouraged to book a COVID test twice a week even if they have no symptoms. There is a network of Community Testing Centres and Testing Pop-Ups across Staffordshire, making it easier than ever

before to book a rapid Covid test and get a result in around 30 minutes. These are open to everyone who lives or works in Staffordshire.

5.1.5.7. As part of central government's testing programme, from Friday 9th April, lateral flow kits for home use became available for free at all testing sites, pharmacies and through the post.

5.1.5.8. The NHS in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent continues to roll out COVID-19 vaccines. All people over 45 in England can now book a Covid jab and people are encouraged not to delay and book their vaccination. This move comes as all over-50s and high-risk groups have been offered the vaccine ahead of the mid-April deadline set by the government – meaning the second phase of the rollout to younger cohorts can now begin.

5.1.5.9. The Council has supported communications campaigns regarding vaccinations, including information to tackle myths and misinformation.

5.1.5.9.1. Some myths circulating about Covid vaccines:

- **They contain animal products. FALSE.** They contain no animal products, human products or microchips. The AstraZeneca vaccine does contain trace amount of ethanol, but this is allowed in Islam to safeguard health.
- **It will give you Covid. FALSE.** None of the vaccines can give you the virus.
- **It will change your DNA. FALSE.** It is impossible for any of the vaccines to alter your DNA.
- **They haven't been properly tested. FALSE.** All Covid vaccines have been through a safe and thorough testing process and are safe.

5.1.5.9.2. A few tips to help sort fact from fiction:

- **Look where the information is coming from.** Is it someone you know? Do they have a proper source for the information, or is it coming from 'a friend of a friend,' or an online source that isn't verified? Always be curious about where information is from, and don't be afraid to question it. Sometimes, all it takes is a quick Google search to show that the information has been proven to be false.
- **Get the whole story.** Look beyond the headline or the video. Many messages will contain vague and unspecific information. This is often a sign that what you're looking at may not be accurate.
- **How does the information make you feel?** A lot of misinformation is designed to make you feel panicked, or angry, or both. If you feel this way, you're more likely to share something and this is exactly what the people behind the false information want. Don't be manipulated – always do your own research, listen to experts, and form your own opinions.

5.1.5.10. Local Authorities and local Clinical Commissioning Groups are working closely with local communities to ensure as many eligible people as possible take up the offer of a vaccine. For example, in a bid to increase vaccination take up in Burton’s four areas of interest, a pop up vaccination clinic took place on Friday 5th March at the community centre at Central Jamia Mosque Rizvia on Uxbridge Street. The pop up clinic was designed to target residents who are eligible for a vaccine from the wards of Anglesey, Shobnall, Eton Park and Horninglow.

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 announcement on 30th December 2020 that further restrictions were to be implemented with effect from 31st December 2020 and the move into Tier 4 restrictions, 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	In accordance with COVID-19 restrictions, Burton Market Hall reopened on Monday 12 th April.
Brewhouse Arts Centre	The Brewhouse will be partially re-opening for activities permitted under current restrictions from w/c 26 April with the aim (Government roadmap permitting) to open to the public fully from w/c 24 May. The Brewhouse and Arts team have delivered a series of online holiday activities and ‘virtual’ projects during the temporary closure of the building (since 1 November 2020) and will be continuing some of this remote delivery as well as developing a series of outreach events across the Summer to encourage audiences back to The Brewhouse in a COVID secure way.
Open Spaces	All outdoor sports facilities, outdoor gym facilities, parks and children’s play areas are open in accordance with COVID-19 restrictions.
Council Leisure Facilities (Meadowside Leisure Centre, Uttoxeter Leisure Centre and Shobnall Leisure Complex), run by Everyone Active	Everyone Active reopened Shobnall Leisure Complex on 29 th March 2021, and Meadowside and Uttoxeter Leisure Centres on 12 th April 2021.

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.

5.1.6.4. For example residents observing Ramadan are being urged to continue following the latest coronavirus guidance and taking up the vaccine when eligible. BIMA (British Islamic Medical Association) and many other scholars feel that getting a coronavirus test during Ramadan does not break the fast.

5.1.6.5. Following the Government's announcement confirming the reopening of non-essential retail from Monday 12th April, the Council is encouraging residents to 'Stay Local' in its latest campaign to support businesses in the Borough. The 'Stay Local' campaign, which features a range of local business owners, is designed to promote Burton and Uttoxeter town centres, as well as other high streets and shopping areas across East Staffordshire, whilst reminding residents to continue to shop safely. Local businesses can download the 'Stay Local' resources from the Council's website, to help promote their business and demonstrate how they are adhering to safety guidance. The campaign toolkit also features a range of assets for local residents to use to show their support. This campaign is the latest of a number of initiatives put in place by the authority to help residents stay safe during the Coronavirus pandemic, including town centre signage and the introduction of Covid marshals.

5.1.6.6. Other campaigns have included the "Carry it in carry it out" messaging regarding responsible use of open spaces; the "Do it for what matters" messaging regarding restrictions and guidance; and the "Trusted Voices" regarding testing and vaccination take up.

5.1.6.7. Service delivery and communications campaigns will continue to adapt to reflect changing government guidance.

5.1.7. People and Processes

5.1.7.1. As of 27th April 2021 the Council has 286 employees including casual staff. The Council has had a total of 100 absences due to employees or their family members / close contacts reporting COVID-19 symptoms, with no new absences reported in the preceding week and no people currently absent. The Council has maintained no COVID-19 absences for 2 continuous weeks.

5.1.7.2. To inform the planning steps moving forward, and building on the survey from 2020, a further staff survey will explore current staff experiences of homeworking during the latest lockdown, and their views in regard to returning to the Council's work-based premises in the months ahead. Following survey returns due back mid-April, insight from responses will be analysed and discussed.

5.1.7.3. A cross-government Regulatory Services Task and Finish Group has prioritised regulatory services activities to help support local authority decision-making during the response to coronavirus. The Council's Environmental Health team will continue to focus on COVID work and other high priority areas as identified by the group.

5.1.7.4. The Council has implemented a Noise App to assist with the investigation of noise complaints, reducing the need for officers to visit complainants' properties to install noise monitoring equipment. The Noise App is a quick and easy way to record noise which is causing a nuisance. It allows residents to make short audio recordings of the noise and enter details about the nature of the disturbance using their smartphone which then combine to make an electronic noise diary. This can then be shared with the Council to support a complaint.

5.1.7.5. Additionally the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has removed the requirement to report on the delivery of the Food Service Plan for 2020/21.

5.1.7.6. COVID Marshals continue to be active within the Borough (from 6th November). Our COVID Marshals are 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 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.

5.1.7.7. A parks working group has been established with key agencies to co-ordinate activity and communication, and encourage the safe, healthy and active use of open spaces.

5.1.8. Finances

5.1.8.1. A number of schemes have been introduced by the Government in order to support businesses that have been forced to close due to COVID-19 restrictions. Further information can be found on the [Coronavirus Business Support and Advice webpage](#).

5.1.8.2. The Council (as of 14th April) has awarded:

	Amount	Number
Business Rate Reliefs		
Nursery Discount Relief (2020-21 & 2021-22)	£521,184.70	21
Expanded Retail Discount Relief (2020-21 & 2021-22)	£37,937,126.45	836
TOTAL	£38,458,311.15	857
Business Support Grants		
LRSB (Closed) (Addendum) scheme (covers 5Nov - 2 Dec)	£1,281,742.00	820
LRSB (Sector) scheme	£285.71	1
Additional Restrictions Grants	£740,000.00	74
LRSB (Closed) scheme (covers 2 Dec to 30 Dec)	£406,772.00	488
LRSB (Open) scheme (covers 2 Dec to 30 Dec)	£27,249.94	44
LRSB (Closed) Tier 4 scheme (covers 31 Dec - 4 Jan)	£231,558.11	827

Christmas Support Payment for Wet-Led Pubs	£62,000.00	62
LRSB (Closed (Addendum) scheme (covers 5 Jan - 15 Feb)	£1,961,622.00	834
Closed Business Lockdown Payment (one-off grant)	£3,922,000.00	834
LRSB (Closed (Addendum) scheme (covers 16 Feb - 31 Mar)	£2,050,670.00	832
Restart Grants scheme (from 1 April)	£5,436,052.00	745
TOTAL	£16,119,951.76	5561
Council Tax Hardship Fund		
Fund closed wef 31/03/2021	£799,922.66	3447
Test and Trace Support Payments		
Main scheme	£251,000.00	502
Discretionary scheme	£88,500.00	177
TOTAL	£339,500.00	679
OVERALL TOTAL		
OVERALL TOTAL	£55,717,685.57	10,544

5.1.8.3. The Council had recently made an application to the National Leisure Recovery Fund (NLRB) for a grant to support its Leisure Operating Contract with Everyone Active, and the Council has now been advised that we have been awarded £236,173. The NLRB was launched to support publicly owned leisure facilities through the COVID-19 crisis, and aims to assist the reopening and recovery of leisure services across the country and prevent further closures of outsourced leisure operators.

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 previously 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. In March 2021 the Government have announced £56m of funding for local authorities to support the safe and successful reopening of high streets. East Staffordshire have been allocated £106,046.

5.1.8.7. The Department of Health and Social Care have set out funding of £400m for 2021/22 in relation to the Contain Outbreaks Management Fund. East Staffordshire has been provided with an indicative allocation of £166,496.

5.1.8.8. 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.

5.1.8.9. 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. In addition there is a scheme to compensate authorities for 75% of business rates and council tax losses, however this does not cover all of the losses that are incurred.

5.1.8.10. The impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy is extensive and this is being monitored and updated on a regular basis to reflect the most recent information, with the Quarter 3 forecast position presented to Cabinet during December. Within the Spending Review and provisional local government finance settlement announced in December 2020 and subsequently finalised in February 2021 the Government set out further Covid-19 related financial support for local authorities in relation to 2021/22. However this is not currently sufficient to meet our expected cost and income pressures. Nevertheless, 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**

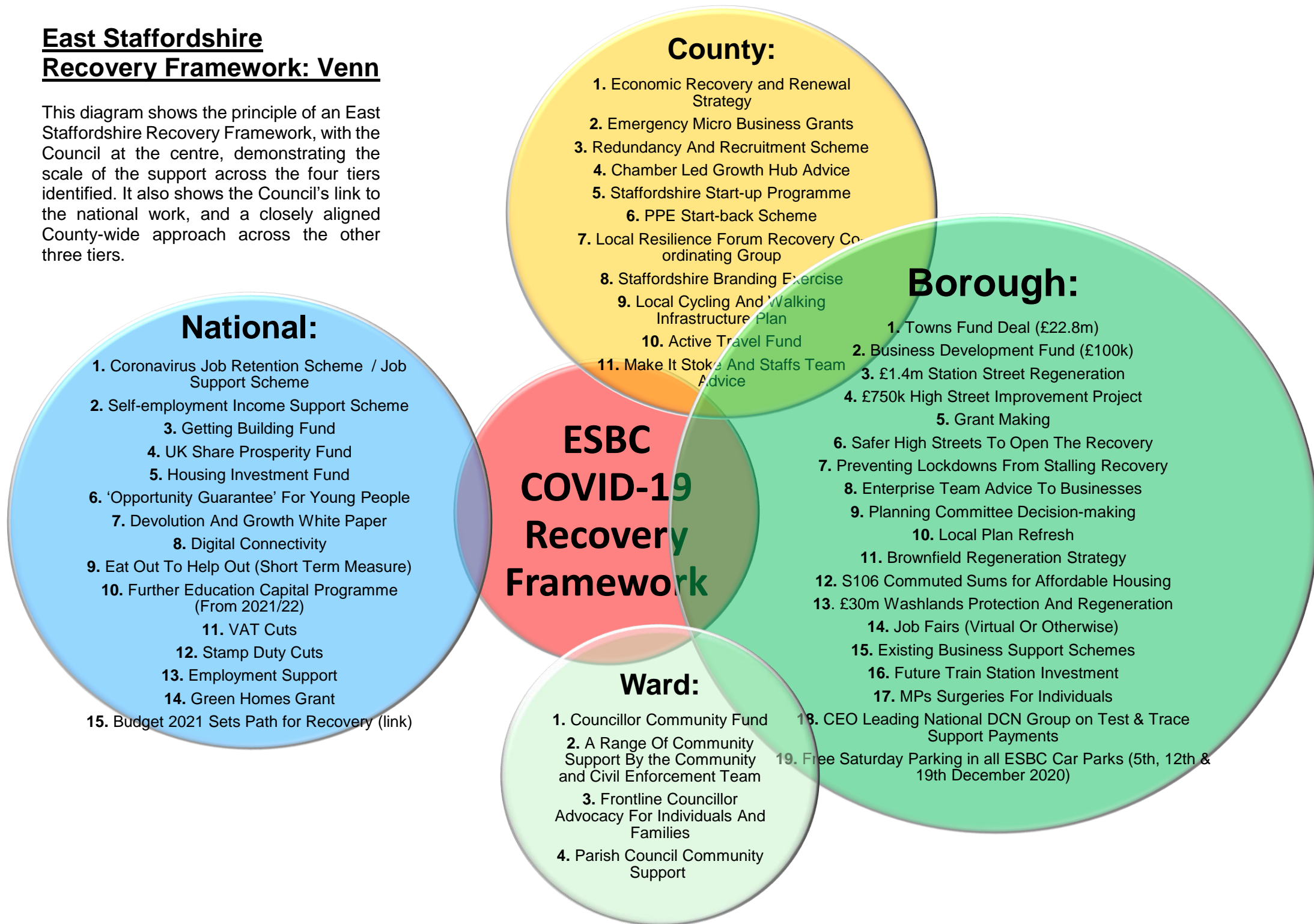
5.2.1. A civil emergency can be considered in two distinct phases. "Response" encompasses the actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of an emergency, whereas "Recovery" is the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating following an emergency.

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 has supported 24 businesses so far throughout the year with 15 of those being supported specifically for COVID-19 related issues. 	C&P

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
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
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

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
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 has been included in the Town Investment Plan, which has now been submitted to Government. The proposal focuses on delivering the short and medium term priority interventions. 	C&P
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

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
Borough Level		
<p>1. Towns Fund (£22.8m)</p>	<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 have been 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. • The Burton Town Deal Board has announced that the town has been awarded £22.8m following the submission of the Burton Town Investment Plan in December 2020. This award of £22.8m compares to an average allocation of £22.14m per town for the 7 Town Deals across the West Midlands and £22.6m nationally. The Chair of the Board and East Staffordshire Borough Council, as the accountable body, will discuss and agree Heads of Terms with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government regarding the terms of the grant. Following this, the town has 12 months to create and assess business cases for each of the seven interventions being supported by the Towns Fund. 	C&P
<p>2. Business Development Fund (£100k)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has launched a£100,000 grant scheme for new and growing businesses. • Entrepreneurs setting up in business in East Staffordshire and Small and Medium sized businesses looking to grow are being urged to take advantage of a new injection of cash from East Staffordshire Borough Council. Businesses can apply for funding from anywhere between £500 	F

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
	<p>up to £10,000, with both established businesses and fledgling 'start-ups' encouraged to apply. Businesses must be willing to match the funding – so for each £1 the Council commits, businesses need to match this with £1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme will open on Monday 19th April 2021. 	
<p>3. £1.4m Station Street Regeneration</p>	<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. 	<p>C&P</p>
<p>4. £750k High Street Improvement Project</p>	<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 commenced on 4th January 2021 and is being delivered by SCC's delivery partner, Amey, with the project completing in the spring / summer of 2021. 	<p>C&P</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. See paragraph 5.1.8.2 for some further information. 	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 ‘Stay Local Shop Safe’ campaign supporting Reopening High Streets Safely was launched in the lead up to Christmas. This included outdoor media but was a predominantly online campaign featuring local business owners and signposting businesses able to operate during ‘lockdown’. From Monday 12th April, East Staffordshire Borough Council is encouraging residents to ‘Stay Local’ in its latest campaign to support businesses in the Borough. The ‘Stay Local’ campaign, which features a range of local business owners, is designed to promote Burton and Uttoxeter town centres, as well as other high streets and shopping areas across East Staffordshire, whilst reminding residents to continue to shop safely. Local businesses can download the ‘Stay Local’ resources from the Council’s website, to help promote their business and demonstrate how they are adhering to safety guidance. The campaign toolkit also features a range of assets for local residents to use to show their support. 	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 were offered through the GBSLEP Growth Hub on 30th September for applications from businesses across East Staffordshire. The small grants available ranged £1,000 - £3,000. Eligible businesses were 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. 	<p>C&P</p>
<p>9. Planning Committee Decision-making</p>	<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&P</p>

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
<p>10. Local Plan Refresh</p>	<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. A recommendation was agreed at the October 2020 meeting of Full Council that the update to the Local Plan be delayed for a maximum of 5 years with an annual review carried out, as recommended by the Development Plan Committee 23 September 2020. 	<p>P&P</p>
<p>11. Brownfield Regeneration Strategy</p>	<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. 	<p>C&P</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. The planning application for the Washlands enhancement project has now been submitted. 	<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, there have been three virtual jobs fairs delivered during 2020/21. 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
19. Free Saturday Parking in all ESBC Car Parks (5th, 12th & 19th December 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Staffordshire Borough Council previously agreed to waive car parking charges on ALL Council owned car parks on Saturdays; 5th, 12th and 19th December 2020. Saturdays tend to be the busiest shopping days in the run up to Christmas. Waiving parking charges on these specified dates was to encourage more footfall to the towns safely and to provide a boost to our retailers and businesses. This offer was in addition to the "free after 3" parking offer which already offers free parking in the Coopers Square and Burton Place (Lower) car parks in Burton upon Trent and the Maltings car park in Uttoxeter every day after 3pm. 	SC&C
Ward Level		
1. Councillor Community Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2020, 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

Scheme / Initiative	Detail	Balanced Scorecard Theme
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 EHWP20 “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
3. Frontline Councillor Advocacy For Individuals And Families: <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
4. Parish Council Community Support	<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. 	C&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 continues to be extensive and this is being monitored and updated on a regular basis to reflect the most recent information and taking into account any additional financial support from Government.

6.1.3. Within the Spending Review and local government finance settlement the Government set out further Covid-19 related financial support for local authorities in relation to 2021/22. However this is not currently sufficient to meet our expected cost and income pressures. The Council's underlying financial position is robust and this provides a strong foundation of financial resilience during these unprecedented circumstances, which has enabled a balanced budget to be set.

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