



EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT COVER SHEET

Title of Report:	COVID-19 Emergency Planning Recovery Update (January 2023)	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
Meeting of:	Corporate Management Team: 14th December 2022	X
	Leader and Deputy Leaders: 19th December 2022	X
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group: 4th / 5th January 2023	X
	Cabinet: 17th January 2023	
	Scrutiny Value for Money Council Services Committee Scrutiny Community Regeneration Committee Scrutiny 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: **John Teasdale**

Date Signature

Chief Finance Officer: **Sal Khan**

Date Signature

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Cabinet

Date: 17th January 2023

REPORT TITLE:	COVID-19 Emergency Planning Recovery Update (January 2023)
PORTFOLIO:	Finance and Treasury Management
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 a review of the local framework of activities that contribute to the Borough's recovery from the impacts arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Recovery aspects have been summarised in this report by considering the themes of: Local Economy and Business; Infrastructure and the Environment; Physical and Psychological Health of the Community; and Embedding New Best Practice and Supporting Communities to Adapt to New Norms of Behaviour.
- 2.2. The Council and its partners continue to act effectively to support recovery from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic emergency.
- 2.3. A full summary of the activity can be seen in the summary table provided in paragraph 5.2.5 of this report.

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. 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 SRF which is made up of multiple agencies who work together to plan and prepare for localised incidents and civil emergencies.

4. Contribution to Corporate Priorities

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

5. Recovery Phase Update (March 2022)

5.1. Current COVID-19 Position

- 5.1.1. The Government has removed remaining domestic restrictions in England.
- 5.1.2. Although restrictions have been removed, infection and health complications from COVID-19 remain a risk.
- 5.1.3. There are still ways that everybody in Staffordshire can help stop the spread of infection and keep our communities safe:
 - Stay at home if you can if you're displaying Covid-19 symptoms
 - Get your vaccine or booster if you are eligible
 - Consider wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed spaces such as on public transport and shops
 - Meet people outdoors or let fresh air in if meeting indoors
 - Continue to wash your hands or use sanitiser regularly throughout the day

- 5.1.4. The Government has [further information on their website](#)

5.2. Overview

- 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. Information on Government advice and guidance can be accessed via <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>. 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](#).

5.2.3. The Council will continue to work with its partners on preparedness for any future emergencies and on the ongoing recovery of the area. The Council will continue to take an active role in any strategic response and recovery coordinating groups facilitated through the LRF with its partners as necessary.

5.2.4. This report considers the progress towards recovery in the context of the four thematic areas of focus as shown below:

(1) Local Economy and Business	(2) Infrastructure and the Environment
(3) Physical and Psychological Health of the Community	(4) Embedding New Best Practice and Supporting Communities to Adapt to New Norms of Behaviour

5.2.5. The following table provides a summary overview with full detail on the contributions to recovery provided in the subsequent sections of this report:

Local Economy and Business (para 5.3)

- The Council has applied reductions to 242 accounts totalling £3,306,983.68 to Business Rates payers that were eligible for the Covid -19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF).
- As of 30th November 2022, the Council has issued payments totalling £6,485,100 to 43,234 to Council Tax payers eligible for the Council Tax Energy Rebate.
- The total paid under the CTER Discretionary scheme by the closing date of 30th November was £205,957.
- The Council previously announced a further £100,000 investment to support local new and growing businesses; and local groups and organisations are also being encouraged to take advantage of the £100,000 Community Regeneration Fund.
- The Council has announced an exciting line up of 'Christmas in Burton' events ahead of the 2022 festive season. The programme kicked off on Sunday 27th November with the annual Christmas lights switch on event.
- The Council has recently approved an updated Procurement Policy which aims to maximise opportunities for local businesses and suppliers to provide goods and services to the organisation.
- Following the conclusion of the work under taken by the cross-party Market Hall Working Group, the Council has taken the decision to commission detailed business cases on a range of options for the future development of the Market Hall.
- The Council is once again removing its car parking charges on all Council owned car parks in the run up to Christmas on Saturday 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th December.

Infrastructure and the Environment (para 5.4)

- The submission of four projects from the Burton Towns Fund programme was agreed in March and summary documents for the projects have now been submitted to Government. Approval for these projects has recently been given by Government.
- A bid was submitted to the second round of the Levelling Up Fund on 2nd August, following consultation with Elected Members and the public. The Council has bid for three projects
- The Council has submitted an Investment Plan for East Staffordshire for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which was submitted to Government on 1st August 2022.
- The Council has announced plans to undertake a public consultation exercise in the New Year on the final concept plans for the Maltings development.
- The Council has commissioned 'thinkingplace' to work with it to develop a forward-looking place narrative for Burton upon Trent. This will help build civic pride and confidence, market the area to attract inward investment and visitors, create jobs, and support existing business in the area
- East Staffordshire's entries in this year's Heart of England In Bloom competition have been rewarded for their hard work, as they collected a haul of gold medals at the regional awards on Thursday 22nd September
- Burton in Bloom's entry was recognised at the RHS Britain in Bloom awards held on 10th October. The town was awarded a Silver Gilt for its entry, and there was a special award for the work the Council leads with young people.
- The Council has been seeking residents' opinions on potential locations for tree planting, in an effort to increase carbon capture areas and enhance the Borough's biodiversity.
- The Go Garden open day took place at Uttoxeter Leisure Centre on 27th October.
- In December the Council approved plans for additional capital investment to be made for the enhancements to the Washlands

Physical and Psychological Health of the Community (para 5.5)

- The Council has continued to work with its partners to encourage local take up of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. The Council has supported communications campaigns notifying residents of opportunities for receiving the vaccine.
- During November Everyone Active encouraged a greater number of over 60s to become active, with the launch of its Age Is Just a Number campaign. The Active Communities team managed another Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) funded project during the Summer holidays which saw 458 school children who usually access free school meals attend Shobnall for activities and a free hot meal
- An exciting line up of festive shows is set to take place at The Brewhouse in as part of the Council's Christmas in Burton celebrations. The events include family theatre, storytelling and comedy.
- The Council delivered a range of activities this October Half Term, including a wide range of activities at Burton Market Hall and the Brewhouse Arts Centre.
- The Council has continued to provide communications support to the campaigns to promote the mental health and wellbeing help and support which is available from a range of organisations in Staffordshire.
- The Council is working closely with several local organisations to provide residents with a number of warm spaces this winter. The Council is also to donate £300 to nine free food providers operating in the Borough.
- The Potting Shed is a project developed in partnership with Fountains High School. Students learn gardening skills, develop their customer service manner and take part in activities which will help to prepare them for the world of work.
- Feel Good Friday sessions aim to connect participants with horticulture in a way that gives them a sense of purpose and community as well as affording them the opportunity to learn horticultural skills.

Embedding New Best Practice and Supporting Communities to Adapt to New Norms of Behaviour (para 5.6)

- The Council continues to operate its meetings using a mix of in-person, virtual and hybrid interaction, with formal committee meetings being safely conducted at the Town Hall.
- The Council has launched a new strategy with aim of developing its relationship with the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE). The new strategy outlines a number of ways in which the Council is looking to build upon its relationship with the VCSE.
- Communicated via the Member briefing to Borough Councillors was a Venn diagram showing a summary of responses and "business as usual" actions that contribute to mitigating the cost of living crisis.
- Members agreed that the Council would sign up to the Dying to Work Campaign, aimed at supporting employment protection for terminally ill workers, recognising that terminal illness requires support and understanding and not avoidable stress and worry.
- The Council's Corporate Plan for 2022/23 was refreshed at the Council meeting in March, containing a combination of transformational objectives seeking to change and regenerate the Borough, as well as service indicators to monitor the delivery of key everyday council services.
- Over the coming year the Council will continue to build on its Digital Strategy objectives.
- The Council's regeneration work has featured an emphasis on walking and cycling to create 'easy in-easy out' of our town centres, and encouragement to work from home into the future and Active Travel.

5.3. Local Economy and Business

- 5.3.1. The Council has applied reductions to 242 accounts totalling £3,306,983.68 to Business Rates payers that were eligible for the Covid -19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF).
- 5.3.2. As of 30th November 2022, the Council has issued payments totalling £6,485,100 to 43,234 to Council Tax payers eligible for the Council Tax Energy Rebate of £150 per household. Payments have been made directly into bank accounts from the details we hold for Council Tax payers that pay by Direct Debit. For those Council Tax payers that do not pay by Direct Debit, we have paid via BACS transfer, post office voucher or by direct allocation to their Council Tax account.
- 5.3.3. Council Tax payers who live in properties with a Council Tax Band of E, F, G, or H aren't entitled to the Council Tax Energy Rebate, unless they meet the criteria of the Council's Discretionary Energy Rebate scheme as published on the Council's website. The scheme closed to applications on 14th November 2022.
- 5.3.4. CTER Discretionary scheme (pre amendment) - £150 payments were made to 131 customers who fell into the following groups: in receipt of means tested benefits or disability benefits on or after 1 April 2022, occupied a property in ESBC and had not received a CTER payment from another Council.
- 5.3.5. The Council is also in the process of updating the policy to automatically award a discretionary relief top up payment to all Council Tax Reduction scheme claimants without the need for them to apply. These payments will be by direct allocation to their Council Tax account.
- 5.3.6. CTER Discretionary scheme (post amendment) - £150 top-up payments were made to 313 customers who fell into the following groups: in receipt of means tested benefits or disability benefits on or after 1 April 2022, occupied a property in ESBC and had not received a CTER payment from another Council, where a resident was otherwise exempt or disregarded for Council Tax purposes due to severe mental impairment plus further top-up payments of £23 to 6,059 household where the liable resident was in receipt of Council Tax support on or after 1 April 2022, irrespective of the Council Tax Band
- 5.3.7. The total paid under the CTER Discretionary scheme by the closing date of 30th November was £205,957.
- 5.3.8. The Council previously announced a further £100,000 investment to support local new and growing businesses, building on the success of the first Business Springboard Boost scheme. The grant fund scheme is designed to help local businesses grow and flourish, supporting them to achieve their ambitions and simultaneously stimulate the local economy. New businesses can apply for funding from anywhere between £500 and £5,000 with existing businesses up to £10,000, which must be matched by the businesses own funding. The Council has allocated the majority of these monies with just £6,437 remaining in the fund.

- 5.3.9. Local groups and organisations across East Staffordshire are being encouraged to take advantage of the Community Regeneration Fund, a new 12 month long scheme to support the ongoing regeneration of the Borough. The fund is designed to help deliver regeneration projects that help improve local areas. The total amount of funding available through the scheme is £100,000, with successful applicants receiving grants between £1,000 and £16,000. At least 20% of the total cost of the project will need to be funded from other sources or by the applicant.
- 5.3.10. Advice and support continue to be provided to local businesses through the ongoing activities of the Enterprise Team, which includes promoting within the Borough business funding, support schemes, workshops and activities available nationally or through partners such as the Local Enterprise Partnerships including the Business Springboard Boost and Enterprise for Success schemes.
- 5.3.11. The Council is also continuing its series of Retail & Hospitality Forums for Burton and Uttoxeter based High Street businesses in those sectors, where they can hear from Growth Hub advisors and the Council on business support and funding opportunities.
- 5.3.12. Jobs fairs continue to be delivered by the Way to Work Partnership of which the Council is a key partner. The Way to Work partnership successfully supported the local MP's jobs fair at Pirelli Stadium on 29th September 2022. Over 500 job seekers attended this successful event.
- 5.3.13. The 2022 Business Awards for East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire reached its conclusion with the Winners announced at a Gala Awards Evening at the Pirelli Stadium on Thursday 10th November with 270 guests enjoying the event.
- 5.3.14. The Council has announced an exciting line up of 'Christmas in Burton' events ahead of the 2022 festive season. The programme kicked off on Sunday 27th November with the annual Christmas lights switch on event, which included a wide range of family entertainment, activities, food & drink stalls and fireworks. The Market Hall was also open, hosting a festive market alongside regular stall holders.
- 5.3.15. The Council's programme of events continues into December with festive Markets at Burton Market Hall and Place. Shoppers will be able to experience a festive treat, as the Craft Market returns on Saturday 3rd December, featuring a wide range of traders and makers from across the local area. On Saturday 10th December, a Festive Food Market came to Burton's Market Place, featuring a wide range of food and drink stalls, hot food vendors and family entertainment.
- 5.3.16. The Council has supported Staffordshire University's campaign to offer a wide range of free masterclasses and short courses, both in person and online, to support professional development in several areas. You can read about the course content here: [Funded training and development - Staffordshire University \(staffs.ac.uk\)](https://staffs.ac.uk)

5.3.17. The Council has recently approved an updated Procurement Policy which aims to maximise opportunities for local businesses and suppliers to provide goods and services to the organisation.

5.3.18. Following the conclusion of the work under taken by the cross-party Market Hall Working Group, the Council has taken the decision to commission detailed business cases on a range of options for the future development of the Market Hall. The three options to be considered are the continued use of the Market Hall as a traditional market, conversion into a food hall or adaptation into an events space.

5.3.19. The Council is once again removing its car parking charges on all Council owned car parks in the run up to Christmas on Saturday 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th December 2022.

5.4. Infrastructure and Environment

5.4.1. The submission of four projects from the Burton Towns Fund programme was agreed in March and summary documents for the projects have now been submitted to Government. Approval for these projects was given by Government in August. A Project Team consisting of project managers, architects and engineers is due to be commissioned to help take the High Street Linkages project forward.

5.4.2. A bid was submitted to the second round of the Levelling Up Fund on 2nd August, following consultation with Elected Members and the public. The Council has bid for three projects under the themes of Regeneration and Town Centre Investment and Cultural Investment, which are: Revitalising the Market Quarter, Creating a new multi-activity indoor leisure facility, and the renewal of Bass House. It is expected that a decision will be made at the end of January 2023.

5.4.3. UKSPF plan has now been approved and work is underway on working with partners to deliver business support schemes. As part of the UKSPF, a new Village Enhancement Programme is due to be launched in January, allocating £750,000 (across two rounds) towards the regeneration of villages and hamlets across the Borough.

5.4.4. The Council has announced plans to undertake a public consultation exercise in the New Year on the final concept plans for the Maltings development, ahead of progressing the regeneration of the Maltings site during 2023/24. Building on previous consultation the Council has developed a number of concept sketches of how the new site could be regenerated. These sketches will be used to help people imagine how the site could be improved and what local community in Uttoxeter think is important in the Town Centre.

5.4.5. The Council will also work closely with partners to progress the Uttoxeter Sports Hub and explore opportunities to bring in financial assistance to expedite the creation of the Sports Hub, alongside the £500,000 Section 106 contribution, previously secured by the Council.

- 5.4.6. The Council has commissioned 'thinkingplace' to work with it to develop a forward-looking place narrative for Burton upon Trent. This will help build civic pride and confidence, market the area to attract inward investment and visitors, create jobs, and support existing business in the area. Burton upon Trent has some great assets and lots of potential, and more needs to be done to raise the profile and image of the town. A consultation is running to gather views to help understand local issues and priorities as well as ideas for the future of Burton upon Trent. Consultation has already taken place in the form of one to one meetings with key stakeholders from across the private, public and voluntary sectors and a steering group has been convened with a second meeting scheduled for September. Focus groups and workshops with key stakeholders including members were held September. An online survey ran until 31st August 2022. Thinking Place has developed a visual language with a range of professional photographs depicting the positive assets of the town. These images will be available for all partners to use on marketing and publicity material. The next stage in the work is a launch event likely to be in early March 2023.
- 5.4.7. To further improve the visitor economy in East Staffordshire, a standalone tourism website, along with the development of a dedicated tourism brand and marketing plan, will be established to create an identity for the Borough, its attractions, partners and events. The Council has developed an East Staffordshire Tourism Partnership, bringing together local businesses to share ideas and develop this aspect of the economy within the Borough. The Council has also recently undertaken a review of its Tourism Plan which was approved by Council in November 2020. This plan sets out a vision, as well as the actions the Council has taken, to promote the strengths of East Staffordshire's tourism offer and looks to build an image for the Borough as an emerging tourist destination. As part of this review, a visitor audit has since been completed, which includes data on the Borough's visitor economy and indicates just how important this sector is for East Staffordshire.
- 5.4.8. East Staffordshire's entries in this year's Heart of England In Bloom competition have been rewarded for their hard work, as they collected a haul of gold medals at the regional awards on Thursday 22nd September. In claiming the awards, East Staffordshire entries have now collected a total of 36 consecutive gold medals since 2008. Burton upon Trent, who are also bidding for RHS Britain in Bloom glory later this year, made it a total of 14 consecutive gold medals, as the town collected gold in the small city category. There were also golds for entries in Winshill, as well as Uttoxeter, who also took a win in the small town category. East Staffordshire parks, open spaces and neighbourhood entries also claimed a total of 21 medals, including 12 gold.
- 5.4.9. Burton in Blooms' entry was officially recognised at the RHS Britain in Bloom awards held on Monday 10th October. The town, which represented the midlands region in the Small City category, was awarded a Silver Gilt for its entry, and there was a special award for the work the Council leads with young people, as it claimed a certificate of achievement for Children and Young People participation.
- 5.4.10. The Council has been seeking residents' opinions on potential locations for tree planting, in an effort to increase carbon capture areas and enhance the

Borough's biodiversity. Although areas within the ownership of the Council are preferred, any location can be considered.

5.4.11. The Go Garden open day took place at Uttoxeter Leisure Centre on 27th October, including bulb planting, craft tables, a treasure hunt, Autumn activities and inflatables at the Leisure Centre.

5.4.12. In December the Council approved plans for additional capital investment to be made for the enhancements to the Washlands, an extensive piece of natural land that follows the river through to the heart of Burton. The project will achieve a better balance between the regular flooding of the area and the need for public access and recreation, whilst promoting nature conservation and a more environmentally sustainable approach to green space management.

5.5. Physical and Psychological Health of the Community

5.5.1. The Council has continued to work with its partners to encourage local take up of the COVID-19 vaccination programme in addition to the Flu vaccine. The Council has supported communications campaigns notifying residents of opportunities for receiving the vaccine. To find details of your nearest walk-in clinic use the [NHS Find a walk-in coronavirus vaccination](#) website. Alternatively appointments can be booked by phoning 119 or via the [National Booking Service](#) website. Information on the Flu vaccine can be found on the NHS [Flu vaccine](#) website.

5.5.2. The Council continues to work closely with its leisure operating partner (Everyone Active). The Council continues to monitor and encourage recovery in participation levels across a range of physical activities. Performance and recovery of the leisure facilities and services continue to be reported to senior officers and Members on an ongoing basis.

5.5.3. During November Everyone Active encouraged a greater number of over 60s to become physically and mentally active, with the launch of its Age Is Just a Number campaign. Running from 1st to 30th November, Meadowside Leisure Centre, Uttoxeter Leisure Centre and Shobnall Leisure Complex, encouraged the older generation to visit their local centre and enjoy the wide range of activities on offer. Everyone Active have also joined forces with the JogOn campaign – which is aiming to keep 1 million pairs of running shoes out of landfill. The leisure centres are each hosting a collection bin where members of the local community can drop off their unwanted running shoes.

5.5.4. The Active Communities team managed another Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) funded project during the Summer holidays which saw 458 school children who usually access free school meals attend Shobnall for activities and a free hot meal throughout various days of the six weeks of holidays. During the summer holidays the Active Communities team were successful in securing SPACE funding. This allowed them to provide 1,404 children with the opportunity to get active within the facilities, free of charge.

5.5.5. A number of the proposed interventions considered in the Towns Fund work would contribute to health and wellbeing aspects, including delivering 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) and improvement of the walking and cycling path between the major development at Branston Locks and the town centre through the Shobnall Playing Fields area.

- 5.5.6. An exciting line up of festive shows is set to take place at The Brewhouse in as part of the Council's Christmas in Burton celebrations. The events include family theatre, storytelling and comedy.
- 5.5.7. The Council delivered a range of activities this October Half Term, including a wide range of activities at Burton Market Hall and the Brewhouse Arts Centre. In addition to a range of shows delivered from the Brewhouse, a number of Halloween activities were delivered from Burton Market Hall, including showing cinema classics on a giant cinema screen.
- 5.5.8. The Statutes Fair, operated by Pat Collins Fun Fairs, took place on 3rd and 4th October in the Market Place, Burton, and the surrounding areas of High Street, Lichfield Street and New Street.
- 5.5.9. The Council has continued to provide communications support to the campaigns to promote the mental health and wellbeing help and support which is available [from a range of organisations in Staffordshire](#).
- 5.5.10. The Council is working closely with several local organisations to provide residents with a number of warm spaces this winter, in an effort to combat the increasing cost of living. These community based locations are to be completely free of charge and will offer residents a warm space to enjoy a hot drink. The Council is to soon launch a warm spaces fund, which will provide eligible organisations with up to £1,000 to help open their doors to the public this winter.
- 5.5.11. The Council is also to donate £300 to nine free food providers operating in the Borough. The festive season often sees increased demand for the work done by food banks, and this funding will support the provision of free food across the Borough.
- 5.5.12. The Potting Shed is an exciting project developed in partnership with Fountains High School in Burton. Students from the school's Sixth Form run The Potting Shed as a retail unit, selling top quality plants to the public. Students learn gardening skills, develop their customer service manner and take part in activities which will help to prepare them for the world of work. The Potting Shed is a non-profit project and aims to help develop the students' skills in retail and horticulture. The project has gone from strength to strength, with more and more local residents visiting The Potting Shed to learn about the project and purchase plants. The Potting Shed is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:30am-2pm.
- 5.5.13. Feel Good Friday sessions aim to connect participants with horticulture in a way that gives them a sense of purpose and community as well as affording them the opportunity to learn horticultural skills. All participants report an improvement in wellbeing as a result of attendance at the sessions and this

relates both to the activity and to the sense of purpose and connection that being part of the group gives them.

5.6. Embedding New Best Practice and Supporting Communities to Adapt to New Norms of Behaviour

5.6.1. The Council continues to operate its meetings using a mix of in-person, virtual and hybrid interaction, with formal committee meetings being safely conducted at the Town Hall.

5.6.2. The Council has launched a new strategy with aim of developing its relationship with the Voluntary, Community & Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE). The new strategy outlines a number of ways in which the Council is looking to build upon its relationship with the VCSE. Going forward, the Council aims to encourage collaborative working with the sector, while also improving knowledge and understanding of the VCSE across East Staffordshire. During the Covid-19 pandemic the Borough saw an increase in volunteering, once again showing the need for the VCSE. With this in mind, the Council aims to support local volunteering by regularly sharing information on volunteering opportunities with both members and employees, thereby improving the partnership between the Council and the VCSE.

5.6.3. Communicated via the Member briefing to Borough Councillors was a Venn diagram showing a summary of responses and “business as usual” actions that contribute to mitigating the cost of living crisis. The diagram illustrated the various schemes and initiatives available at a national, county, borough and ward level with the intention that this will be helpful in signposting residents who may contact Members for advice and support. A [cost of living support page](#) has also been published on the Council's website.

5.6.4. Members agreed that the Council would sign up to the Dying to Work Campaign, aimed at supporting employment protection for terminally ill workers, recognising that terminal illness requires support and understanding and not avoidable stress and worry. The Charter was signed at the Town Hall this November.

5.6.5. The Council's Corporate Plan for 2022/23 was refreshed at the Council meeting in March 2022. The refreshed Plan contains a combination of transformational objectives seeking to change and regenerate the Borough, as well as service indicators to monitor the delivery of key everyday council services.

5.6.6. Over the coming year the Council will continue to build on its Digital Strategy objectives. The Council's website content management system is being upgraded providing a secure platform for users and an accessible environment for content editors. Additionally, the Strategic Digital Group are investigating a number of potential enhancements to communications and digital services, including: an elected member intranet; Council mobile application and map based reporting options.

5.6.7. The Council's regeneration work has featured an emphasis on walking and cycling to create 'easy in-easy out' of our town centres, and encouragement to work from home into the future and Active Travel.

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. As the focus of this report is on activities and opportunities for recovery, the financial position of the Council and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on this position are not specifically considered within this report. The financial position of the Council is reported through the regular Revenue and Capital Outturn Reports and the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 onwards sets out spending plans to support recovery.

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 recovery opportunities allows for a joined up overview of the challenges presented by the ongoing COVID-19 emergency.

7.1.2. **Negative** (Threats):

7.1.2.1. The situation and data relating to the recovery 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: **John Teasdale***

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. Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

10.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:

- use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
- process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
- systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
- use new technologies;
- use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
- profile individuals on a large scale;
- process biometric data;
- process genetic data;
- match data or combine datasets from different sources;
- collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
- track individuals' location or behaviour;
- profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
- process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach

10.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

11. Human Rights

11.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

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

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

13. Recommendation(s)

13.1. To note the update detailed within the report.

14. Background Papers

14.1. None

15. Appendices

15.1. None