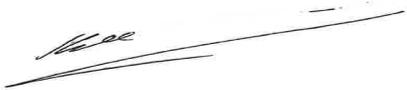


Report Title	Covid-19 Recovery		
Committee	Strategy and Resources Committee		
Committee Date	5 July 2021		
Committee Chair	Councillor Ruth Dombey		
Lead Member	Councillor Sunita Gordon, Lead Member for Resources		
Report From	Helen Bailey, Chief Executive		
Report Author(s)	Sam Barker, Assistant Director of Customers, Transformation & Strategy		
Ward(s) Affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council Business ● All Wards 		
Ambitious for Sutton priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being Active Citizens ● Making Informed Choices ● Living Well Independently ● Keeping People Safe 		
Open/Exempt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open 		
Signed		Date	16 June 2021

1. **Summary**
 - 1.1. Across the borough residents, communities and businesses have been impacted by Covid-19, particularly those that were already more disadvantaged. Many have lost their jobs or face future financial hardship, key sectors of our economy have been severely impacted and young people's education and opportunities have been disrupted.
 - 1.2. The pandemic will significantly change the way people work, commute and live in the borough both during the transition out of the pandemic and more permanently post recovery. As lockdown restrictions continue to be eased the Council is moving out of the initial 'response' phase and considering the work needed to facilitate recovery. As part of this the Council will need to consider what support is needed in the short term as well as the long-term impact of Covid-19 on key services and the needs and priorities of the borough.
 - 1.3. Pre-Covid-19, the Council laid strong foundations for this work. This has stood us in good stead during the pandemic and will help to ensure that Sutton can make a strong recovery.

- 1.4. The Council has a positive vision for the future and clear plans about how to achieve that ambition so that everyone in Sutton can do well and prosper. The pandemic has demonstrated the strength of community spirit in Sutton and that bodes well for the future.
- 1.5. Engagement with residents, communities and businesses will be key to understanding the impact of Covid-19 and ensuring the Council is focused (with our partners) on the priorities that will make a real difference.
- 1.6. This report provides an overview of the Council's recovery work, with a focus on the next six months and how additional government funding, provided to support the Council's response, will be used to deliver this. It also sets out the longer term impacts of the pandemic and the need for meaningful and comprehensive engagement across the borough to shape how the Council will work with its partners to address these impacts and continue to be Ambitious for Sutton.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. To agree the priorities and focus of the Council's initial recovery response
- 2.2. To agree to the use of additional recovery funding provided by the government to support our short and longer term recovery work
- 2.3. To agree to a full programme of engagement with residents, communities and business to shape the Council's ongoing recovery from the pandemic

3. Background

- 3.1. Over the course of the pandemic Strategy and Resources Committee has received regular updates on the Council's response to the pandemic. As a result of the successful roll out of the vaccine, the focus for the Council and its partners is now on recovery. The Council's recovery plans build on the national and regional road-map ensuring that Sutton as a place is able to respond to the needs of our residents, communities and business over the coming months and years ahead.
- 3.2. Over the years the Council, working in partnership across the borough, has laid a strong foundation for what lies ahead. Through the Council's Ambitious for Sutton plan, jobs and opportunities have been brought into the borough. The High Street and district centres are being developed into thriving community hubs. The Council is building high quality affordable homes and providing more mental health support to our residents, including school children.
- 3.3. [Central Government's 4 step plan for lifting lockdown restrictions](#) came into effect from 8th March 2021 and sets the terms for managing recovery from the pandemic at a national level. Across London, the [London recovery programme](#) taskforce has also

committed to nine recovery missions to encourage cross Borough, cross sector and sub-regional collaboration.

4. Covid-19 Short Term Recovery

- 4.1. The Covid-19 pandemic has presented many major challenges for our borough, and has meant significant changes to almost everything the Council does. Alongside this, the Council has also taken positive lessons from the crisis - in particular, the pandemic response has demonstrated the strength of partnership working in the borough through our innovative Sutton Plan partnership.
- 4.2. In March 2021 the Council implemented a recovery programme with a series of work streams - this provides the infrastructure to manage our 'tactical' recovery response over the next six months. These recovery work streams are:
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Opening up services safely | 4. Supporting the vulnerable and community wellbeing |
| 2. Vaccination, test and trace | 5. Supporting Business and the local economy |
| 3. Schools, early years, children and families | 6. Care Sector recovery |
- 4.3. The Council received funding in 2020/21 from the Government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). This had to be used to support the immediate pressure the council was facing as a result of Covid-19. The Council has received a further allocation of £1.209m in 2021/22. This is being allocated to the priorities as set out below.
- 4.4. **Opening up our services safely:** The Council will ensure there is a measured and systematic approach to safely opening up and delivering our services in line with national guidance and local needs, we will also support and work with our business to do the same. The Council will Extend the Community Champions scheme, provide additional street cleaning in town and district centres and increase capacity to ensure events can take place safely and in line with government guidance.
- 4.5. **Vaccination, test and trace:** Continue to oversee the ongoing support to the vaccination programme locally, including ongoing management of the Test and Trace strategy, a targeted communication strategy for communities and businesses, and coordination of incident management in the event of a local outbreak. Funding will be used to continue to support this programme and provide a further allocation for self-isolation payments.
- 4.6. **Schools, early years, children and families:** Provide continued support to schools and early years settings, including supporting schools to remain open safely and ensuring that parents are well informed and supported.
- 4.7. Sutton Council has been supporting all schools throughout the pandemic, including working to support vulnerable pupils and interpreting guidance to help ensure learning has continued as safely and effectively as possible. The Council will continue to support

schools so that they are more able to help young people. Additional capacity will be provided due to an increase of requests for support from schools and parents following the return of schools and easing of restrictions.

- 4.8. **Supporting the vulnerable and community wellbeing:** The pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of the most vulnerable residents including children, families and adults; some of whom have not been previously known to the Council. Such impacts pose a risk of increased demand for social care and additional support, as a result of the impact on people's physical and mental health.
- 4.9. Sutton has an aging population that requires increasing levels of support to live healthy, independent and socially active lives. This group has been particularly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, in terms of risk the disease poses, and reductions or changes to health and care services.
- 4.10. As restrictions are lifted, the Council will continue to work to ensure vulnerable children and adults continue to be supported and safeguarded effectively.
- 4.11. Going forward, the council will continue to work with the voluntary and community sector to help vulnerable people to recover from the pandemic. A fund of £250,000 was made available by the council in April 2021 for organisations to bid for to deliver enhanced services or one off projects, and the Council has agreed to fund 16 organisations to deliver services and projects which will support Covid-19 recovery over the next six months.
- 4.12. The agreed funding will be held to address the following key areas:
- Re-enabling independence; building confidence and connections
 - Supporting those affected by domestic abuse
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Financial resilience: supporting residents to maximise their money
- 4.13. In addition funding for domestic abuse services will be increased to provide additional capacity in the short term.
- 4.14. **Supporting businesses and the local economy:** Supporting businesses and the local economy to recover from the immediate impact of Covid-19 is a key priority for the Council. The Council will continue to ensure that Sutton businesses and the wider public understand and comply with new legislation as restrictions ease - this includes support and advising businesses, while also taking appropriate enforcement action as necessary.
- 4.15. In addition, Sutton Council will work with partners and the community to help Sutton businesses recover, and look for opportunities to create more good jobs for local people. This work will include:
- Continuing to provide financial and other support for businesses who have been impacted by Covid-19.
 - Developing a longer term Employment & Skills Strategy, with a specific focus on creating jobs in 'growth sectors' and on supporting people who are furthest from the job market.

- Continuing to deliver the pioneering London Cancer Hub, which will create thousands of good jobs in Sutton and the subregion, as well as supporting wider economic recovery in the longer term.
- 4.16. Alongside this, the Council will also continue to deliver its Area Renewal programme, which focuses on improving local places through engaging with residents to find out what they most value about their local area, and what would help to improve the area for the future. The first priority for area renewal is the Rosehill area in St Helier, where the council is currently investing over £500k in improvements, with support from the local community.
- 4.17. **Care Sector recovery:** Ongoing proactive support to care homes to remain safe and maintain outbreak response plans. Oversee engagement with providers and continued awareness-raising of infection control, provision of targeted support where required. This workstream will also manage the reopening of any commissioned services that remain reduced or closed.
- 4.18. Management and delivery of communications and engagement across all relevant workstreams is key to ensure Covid-19 messages are communicated and understood.
- 4.19. In addition, the Council will continue to support its workforce to be able to adapt to meet the ongoing challenges presented by the impact of the pandemic.

Contain Outbreak Management Fund

Workstream	COMF allocation (£,000)
Opening up services safely	79
Vaccination, test and trace	100
Schools, early years, children and families	200
Supporting the vulnerable and community wellbeing	250
Supporting Business and the local economy	450
Care Sector recovery	130
Total	1,209

5. Strategic Recovery Planning

- 5.1. While Covid-19 requires continued vigilance in our ongoing response, the Council and its partners have been working on longer term recovery plans, taking the positives we have learned from Covid-19 and addressing the new risks and threats we face. Our recovery

plan will amplify what worked well; and likewise, where we found things not working as well, what we need to do to fix them.

5.2. The plan will be fixed on what residents, communities and businesses are telling us, ensuring we are focused on the right priorities that will enable Sutton to recover from the pandemic.

5.3. It is widely acknowledged that the pandemic has, and will continue to have, a greater ongoing impact on particular groups and parts of the borough. These groups include:

- Young people
- Older people (and those clinically vulnerable)
- People with Learning Disabilities
- BAME communities
- More deprived areas of the borough
- Carers
- New parents
- People with mental health conditions
- Traveller communities

5.4. It will be important that the impact and needs of these groups are fully understood. This will ensure the Council with its partners can focus on putting in place the support needed to ensure that the long term impact of the pandemic can be mitigated as far as possible.

5.5. To reflect the impact of Covid-19 on Sutton Council and our communities, the Council has identified the following key themes as priorities for delivery across the Council in 2021/22. These themes will be built upon over the summer based on the outcomes of the engagement carried out:

- Supporting the most vulnerable
- Important of place
- Local business and employment

5.6. **Supporting the most vulnerable**

5.7. Manage increased demand for services, especially hospital and social care services, and strengthen the care market.

5.8. Help our children and young people catch up on their education, by returning to learning, improving access to digital resources and working with schools and the community to address widening attainment gaps.

5.9. Harness the power of our communities to tackle inequality and social exclusion, champion equality and tackle the effects of poverty, vulnerability, isolation, loneliness and domestic violence; and support this by promoting increased and sustainable social action, volunteering and community capacity.

5.10. **Importance of place**

- 5.11. Climate change: Make sustainability and tackling climate change central to our recovery so that we lay the foundations for a sustainable long-term future.
- 5.12. Improve the quality of neighbourhoods to reflect what people want from their local area.
- 5.13. Affordable housing, to ensure the everyone can access good quality housing.
- 5.14. **Local Business and Employment**
- 5.15. Support business and grow the economy: Build confidence in local businesses, repurpose town centres and create the conditions for business innovation and investment to drive economic growth.
- 5.16. Stimulate job creation and skills: Work with our business partners and higher and further education providers, to invest in getting people back into employment, or starting their careers, supporting skills, training and re-learning.
- 5.17. Invest in regeneration and a sustainable future: Invest in the regeneration of local areas, support affordable housing growth, a fit for the future digital infrastructure and sustainable transport.
- 5.18. **Our Workforce, Estate and Digital**
- 5.19. Develop our people and future ways of working: Invest in a sustainable and resilient workforce through recovery, learning from COVID-19 to embed flexible working, promote well-being and develop new ways of working.
- 5.20. Harness the potential of digital across everything we do: delivering a new website and improved online experience, designing our services digitally and being at the forefront of the use of technology to keep people safe in their homes and tackle climate change.
- 5.21. Utilising our assets to help to deliver the council's priorities and ambitions for the borough, from delivery of the London Cancer Hub to the development of our low carbon goals.

Engagement

- 5.22. Over the coming months the Council, working with it's partners will carry out a programme of engagement across the borough with various different groups to understand the challenges they are now facing and what they need to support them.
- 5.23. The Council will also continue to monitor and analyse the data available in order to understand the ongoing impacts of the pandemic on particular groups and different parts of the borough. These insights will enable the Council to prioritise its support and resources available on the key priorities for the borough, particularly through the delery of the Sutton Health and Care plan.

6. Finance and Legal Commentary

Finance Comment

- 6.1. The financial impact of Covid on 2020/21 budgets and future years is set out in a separate report on the agenda.

Legal Comment

- 6.2. Not applicable

7. Appendices and Background Documents

- 7.1. Appendices

Appendix Letter	Appendix Title
N/A	N/A

- 7.4. Background Documents

Date of Expiry	Background Document
N/A	N/A

8. Consultations

Consultees	Yes/No	Officer	Date of Comments
Finance	Yes	Victoria Goddard Assistant Director, Finance	22/06/21
Legal	No	N/A	N/A