

Executive

22 October 2020

Report of the Interim Head of Paid Service
Portfolio of the Leader of the Council

City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy – October Update

Summary

1. This report provides an update on activities both directly in response to Covid-19 and the work to support recovery and renewal. This follows previous Executive decisions to approve the Recovery and Renewal Plan, which frames the Council's recovery activity for this year.
2. In this month's report, the progress made on the Children's Social Care improvement journey is highlighted. There also remains concern about the growing number of Covid cases in York (like many places across the country). Further updates to Executive will be given at the meeting to ensure the latest information is available.

Recommendations

3. Executive is asked to:
 - a. Note the contents of the report

Background

4. On 25th June, Executive received a report to outline the council's 1-year Recovery and Renewal Strategy. This highlighted the need for a revised set of strategies to address the very significant and immediate impacts of coronavirus across all aspects of life in our city.
5. The strategy set the following principles upon which we will build our response:
 - a. Prioritise the health and wellbeing of our residents, against the immediate threat of coronavirus and the consequences of

changes to the way we live. Public Health guidance will be paramount in all the decisions we make.

- b. Support the economic recovery of the City, helping to create a strong, sustainable and inclusive economy for the future. Learning lessons from the challenges of coronavirus, promote a system that utilises the strengths of our city and region to the benefit of all York’s residents and businesses.
- c. Protect and prioritise the City’s environment and reinforce our work to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- d. Pursue improvements in service delivery where they have been identified as part of the Response phase, creating a more efficient and resilient system.
- e. Reinforce and restore public confidence in the resilience of public agencies and resilience to future challenges and emergencies.

6. Included in June’s report was a One Year Transport and Place Strategy, as the first part of the economic recovery approach. A report in July supplemented this with a Business Support Plan, a Skills and Employment Plan and a Tourism Marketing Plan.

CYC Recovery and Renewal Plan (1 year)				
Economic Recovery Plan			Communities	Corporate
Business Support Plan	One Year Transport and Place Plan	Skills and Employment Plan	Recovery from coronavirus: A community-based approach	Organisational Development Plan
Tourism Marketing Plan				

Latest Outbreak Update

- 7. Given the rapidly changing context in respect of the current second wave of infection, an update on the latest situation will be given verbally to the Executive at the meeting.
- 8. On 12 October the Government outlined a three-tier system for local restrictions, split between ‘medium’, ‘high’ and ‘very high’ levels. The descriptions of what these mean are outlined below:

Local COVID Alert Level – Medium

This is for areas where national restrictions continue to be in place. This means:

- All businesses and venues can continue to operate, in a COVID-19 Secure manner, other than those that remain closed in law, such as nightclubs.
- Certain businesses selling food or drink on their premises are required to close between 10pm and 5am.
- Businesses and venues selling food for consumption off the premises can continue to do so after 10pm as long as this is through delivery service, click-and-collect or drive-thru.
- Schools, universities and places of worship remain open
- Weddings and funerals can go ahead with restrictions on the number of attendees
- Organised indoor sport and exercise classes can continue to take place, provided the Rule of Six is followed
- People must not meet in groups larger than 6, indoors or outdoors

Local COVID Alert Level – High

This is for areas with a higher level of infections. This means the following additional measures are in place:

- People must not meet with anybody outside their household or support bubble in any indoor setting, whether at home or in a public place
- People must not meet in a group of more than 6 outside, including in a garden or other space.
- People should aim to reduce the number of journeys they make where possible. If they need to travel, they should walk or cycle where possible, or to plan ahead and avoid busy times and routes on public transport.

Local COVID Alert Level – Very High

This is for areas with a very high level of infections. The Government will set a baseline of measures for any area in this local alert level. Consultation with local authorities will determine additional measures. The baseline means the below additional measures are in place:

- Pubs and bars must close, and can only remain open where they operate as if they were a restaurant – which means serving substantial meals, like a main lunchtime or evening meal. They may only serve alcohol as part of such a meal.
- Wedding receptions are not allowed

- People must not meet with anybody outside their household or support bubble in any indoor or outdoor setting, whether at home or in a public space. The Rule of Six applies in open public spaces like parks and beaches.
 - People should try to avoid travelling outside the 'Very High' area they are in, or entering a 'Very High' area, other than for things like work, education, accessing youth services, to meet caring responsibilities or if they are in transit.
 - People should avoid staying overnight in another part of the UK if they are resident in a 'Very High' area, or avoid staying overnight in a 'Very High' area if they are resident elsewhere.
9. At time of writing, York is at the "Medium" alert level, meaning national restrictions are in place. The Government is reviewing these alert levels on a weekly basis and an update will be provided at the meeting.

Recovery Updates

Economic

10. A comprehensive update on the available economic intelligence was provided in the last update to Executive.
11. Eligible residents who are required to self-isolate by the Government's Test and Track scheme, will be eligible for one-off payments to support them through the 14-day quarantine period. The new Test and Trace Support Payment scheme is for people on low incomes who are unable to work from home while they are self-isolating. This new scheme will also apply to eligible self-employed people who can prove they are unable to work while self-isolating. Information on how to apply for a self-isolation support payment is available at www.york.gov.uk/selfisolate. Application forms will be available at this link from 9 October.
12. In September, the Council announced a year-long e-scooter trial and selected Europe's leading operator TIER to run the programme. The first e-scooters will be deployed at the University of York, offering residents a new, green and Covid-safe mode of transport for getting around the city. Discussions are taking place as to whether York Hospital will also be able to host the scheme.
13. The Department for Transport-approved scheme will initially see up to 100 e-scooters deployed, with more e-scooters and TIER e-bikes to come.

Communities

14. The ongoing increase in infections in York is a concern. The latest position will be discussed at this meeting.
15. Local data continues to show that the most common way of spreading Coronavirus is people coming together socially and within their home and failing to socially distance with friends and family who they do not live with. To raise awareness of this and to promote people are taking adequate precautions, the council has launched a 'Hands, Face, Space' campaign. The simple acts of washing hands, covering your face and leaving adequate space is the greatest tool in preventing infection.
16. Since the last update, a new walk-through coronavirus testing facility is to open for those with symptoms to book appointments at Wentworth Way Car Park, the University of York, in York. This is as part of the national drive to continue to improve the accessibility of coronavirus testing for local communities. Testing is available only for those with coronavirus symptoms – a high temperature, a new, continuous cough, or a loss or change to sense of smell or taste.
17. As many volunteers have returned to work or education, the council is once again looking for 300 more people to support others across the city. People can find more information, and sign up, here:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YorkCovid19Volunteering>
18. The 1-year Recovery and Renewal Plan contained an action to continue to support the ongoing improvement of Children's Social Care and to use opportunities of more flexible working practices to identify new effective ways of working.
19. As part of regional work to support social care improvement, the council took part in a "Children's Services Front Door Health Check" on 16th and 17th September. This peer-led exercise considered evidence in relation to:
 - Effectiveness of Thresholds, Consent, Step Up/Down
 - Effectiveness of decision making and management oversight
 - The quality of assessments
 - Strength of partnership contribution
 - Effectiveness of QA (through audit analysis)
20. The results of this exercise were sent to the council by the team recently, and the letter is attached as Annex 1.

Corporate

21. With the Council continuing to face significant financial challenges posed by the Coronavirus pandemic, the council has submitted its submission to the Chancellor's Comprehensive Spending Review. The submission urges the Government to 'Back York' by seizing the opportunities that are unique to the city and drive recovery in the region.
22. As part of the submission to the Spending Review, the Council has called on the Government to provide additional funding for York, as part of the levelling-up agenda, as well as urge the Government to continue to work with the Council to relocate a Government department to York.
23. This submission sits alongside other submissions from organisations representing the wider region and local government, including from Yorkshire and the Humber local authorities, the Convention of the North, Transport for the North and the national Local Government Association (LGA).

Communications

24. During the response phase (March - June), the aim of the council's communications was to connect those in need with the help that they needed, whilst also making clear which services were operating and how they could be accessed. Recognising people's different communications needs, the council delivered a blend of on and offline communications. We distributed leaflets / booklets direct to people's homes, approximately one a month, covering essential information, public health advice and details of services that had been disrupted. In two of these, we inserted a pull-out list of food suppliers who could deliver direct to people who were isolating with telephone numbers for residents who did not have access to the internet. We also provided targeted information to groups of people including children and younger people.
25. Since then, public health information has been embedded across recovery and renewal communications, whether safely reopening the city or council services or working with partners to encourage the safe return of visitors or students. The outbreak communications plan has been developed to support delivery of the outbreak management plan which describes three phases of an outbreak, with different communication approaches delivered in each of these.

- a. Phase 1: Prevent - Provide updates about the current situation to prevent outbreaks
- b. Phase 2: Respond – Share information in responses to an alert following increased cases
- c. Phase 3: Manage the outbreak

26. Annex 2 describes the key messages embedded across all our communications, the communications objectives and examples of communications that have been delivered across the city.

Council Plan

27. The Recovery and Renewal Strategy outlines activities for the next year to allow the continued achievement of Council Plan outcomes.

Implications

- **Financial** – No specific impacts identified in this report.
- **Human Resources** – No specific impacts identified.
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** – A principle of recovery is to ensure climate change is considered in decisions taken. The economic recovery plans recognise and respond to the unequal impact of coronavirus and the risk of increasing levels of inequality as a result.
- **Legal** – No specific impacts identified.
- **Crime and Disorder** – No specific impacts identified.
- **Information Technology** – No specific impacts identified.

Risk Management

28. There remain significant areas of risk in responding to this crisis across all areas of recovery. The highest priority continues to be the health and wellbeing of residents and all planning and decisions will be taken with this in mind.

Contact Details

Authors:

Will Boardman
Head of Corporate Policy and
City Partnerships

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Ian Floyd
Interim Head of Paid Service

Report
Approved Date

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Reports

Update on Coronavirus Response – 7 May 2020

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s139955/Coronavirus%20Executive%20Report.pdf>

City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy - June

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=59688&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI55501>

CYC Recovery and Renewal Strategy Update – July

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=59899>

CYC Recovery and Renewal Strategy update - August

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=60167&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI55914>

CYC Recovery and Renewal Strategy update – September

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s142400/Recovery%20and%20Renewal%20Update%20Report.pdf>

Annexes

Annex 1 - Children's Services Front Door Health Check letter

Annex 2 – Communications summary of activity