

**Executive**

**25 June 2020**

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

## **City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy**

### **Summary**

1. The significant and wide-reaching impacts of coronavirus require a reconsideration of the Council's strategies and plans to drive recovery following this unprecedented situation. This paper and supporting annexes outline the proposed approach to support York's recovery over the next year.
2. To deliver these strategies and plans, areas of investment are required and the paper outlines reprioritisation of existing budgets to allow for this investment.

### **Recommendations**

3. Executive is asked to:
  - a. approve the overall Recovery and Renewal Strategy (Annex 1), and the underpinning plans outlined in Annexes 2-4
  - b. approve the recommendation in respect of parking incentives (paragraph 10 of Annex 2b)
  - c. note the update on work to expand the attendance of pupils in schools (Annex 5)
  - d. approve the areas of priority investment and the reprioritisation of budgets, outlined in paragraphs 17-28
  - e. note the development of a 10-year City Plan (paragraph 12)
  - f. note the ongoing consultation with residents and businesses throughout the recovery period (paragraph 29).

### **Background**

4. On 7 May, Executive received a report on the council's initial response to coronavirus. Since then, the council has continued to prioritise the support

of residents, communities and businesses to protect people's health and wellbeing. This will continue to be a primary focus for the council whilst coronavirus remains a threat.

5. Specific examples of work undertaken to date include:
  - a. The swift processing of the Government's Business Support Grants, and the Business Rates relief scheme, to ensure that money was in businesses' bank accounts as quickly as possible. Over £100M has been paid out in direct grants or in business rates relief.
  - b. Additionally, the creation of a small and micro business fund direct from the council to support those businesses who were not eligible for Government Support. This was subsequently when the Government released further funding for discretionary grants.
  - c. The prioritisation of ongoing communications to households, including through print and online media, social media, direct leaflets and *Our City*, addressed to all residential properties.
6. Work has continued within services to adapt to the changing environment and to allow service levels to return to normal as far as possible. To highlight a just a few areas which have progressed since the last report, waste services have recommenced collection of bulky waste and green waste, and household recycling centres have reopened, all with appropriate social distancing measures to protect staff and residents.
7. Significant work across the council and with education partners has been undertaken to facilitate an increase the number of pupils attending schools across York. The progress made is outlined in Annex 5.
8. Democratic Services have recommenced meetings, with Executive, Licensing and Planning committees, and Corporate and Scrutiny Management committees being scheduled as remote meetings.
9. Activities to bring services back to full operational delivery in a new operating context and adapt to changing circumstances will continue. To shape and coordinate this, the Council's proposed Recovery and Renewal Strategy (Annex 1) sets out the approach that the council will take and the priority activities required.

10. The Recovery and Renewal Strategy itself discusses the role of the plan and how it relates to other recovery work. In summary, it describes the key areas of focus for the coming year for the council in order to prioritise recovery for the city and continue to deliver the outcomes described within the Council Plan 2019-2023.
11. During this year, the Council Plan will be reviewed to take into consideration the changed context of the city. At this point, we believe the outcomes contained within with Council Plan remain appropriate and correct, but the activities needed in order to achieve them may need to change. From 2021 onwards, the Council Plan will include the ongoing recovery activity as part of the core-business of the council.
12. Alongside the 1 year Recovery and Renewal Strategy, a 10 year City Plan is being discussed with partner organisations, to define and promote a longer term set of ambitions for the city as a whole. This will be reported to Executive in future reports.
13. The Recovery and Renewal Strategy is underpinned by a variety of more detailed plans and strategies, as below. These will continue to be developed over coming weeks and months and will come to Executive for approval in due course. Those in bold are included as Annexes today. It is also likely that additional plans will be required as the context changes.

<b>CYC Recovery and Renewal Plan (1 year) – Annex 1</b>				
<b>Economic</b>		<b>Communities</b>		<b>Corporate</b>
Business Support Plan	<b>One Year Transport and Place Plan – Annex 2</b>	Skills and Employment Plan	<b>Recovery from coronavirus: A community-based approach – Annex 3</b>	<b>Organisational Development Plan – Annex 4</b>

14. The One Year Transport and Place Strategy reflects the immediate need to ensure the city can safely and effectively support visitors in support of the reopening of businesses. Recommendations in relation to parking incentives and charges in support of the strategy are included in Annex 2b.
15. The Recovery from coronavirus: A community-based approach report proposes a way of working to combine and coordinate the efforts of the council, partner organisations, the voluntary sector, communities and

residents to provide ongoing support, particularly to vulnerable people, building on the work to support residents through the initial stages of the pandemic.

16. The Organisational Development Plan recognises the need to support staff in adapting to a changed way of working and build upon the changes already seen over the last few months to become the organisation required to respond in the best possible way.

## **Financial Considerations**

17. There are likely to be a range of financial implications from the recovery process and it is expected that further reports will be needed to consider a range of issues. Therefore an update will be provided to Executive on a monthly basis over the coming months.
18. Work is ongoing to review the financial impact of the pandemic and recovery, although there are still many unknowns at this stage. In the months ahead we need to review the medium term financial strategy, alongside the usual comprehensive in year budget monitoring process. Regular reports on the Council's financial position will be brought to Executive meetings throughout the year, up to and including the setting of the 2021/22 budget in February 2021.
19. At the start of the pandemic, the Council reacted quickly to ensure financial support was made available for residents and local businesses, including investment in the York Financial Assistance Scheme and the prompt payment of government grants as outlined earlier in the report. A range of measures was also introduced to help suppliers, in line with Government guidance.
20. Clearly the financial impact on local government is a national issue and the Council has actively supported various bodies, such as the Local Government Association, in lobbying Government to recognise the significant financial issues being faced by Councils across the country. The report to Executive on 7<sup>th</sup> May outlined the response to the pandemic and the significant forecast budget gap, estimated at £23m, highlights the scale of the challenge.
21. An initial review has been carried out and individual meetings have been held with all Executive Members to discuss the 2020/21 savings, growth and known financial pressures alongside any new risks, priorities and opportunities for reprioritisation.

22. These budget review meetings discussed the financial implications of the recovery planning process, and the specific actions set out in the recovery strategy. In the main, these can be covered either from within existing service budgets, without any impact on service delivery, or from specific government grants awarded for this purpose.
23. There are some areas where there is a need to allocate additional budgetary provision to enable specific actions to take place now.
24. The table below outlines the initial list of investment to support recovery, with further measures to be reported in coming months.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Proposal for funding</b>
Economic Recovery - investment of up to £100k in the development of a plan and activities as visitors start to return to the city, supporting local businesses including the tourism sector. This funding and the activities to be delivered are subject to a further report to the relevant Executive Member.	To be funded from the non-recurring reallocation of budgets outlined paragraph 27 below.
Communities Recovery - Financial inclusion – detailed outcomes will be developed, however it is proposed that £250k is allocated to continue the valuable work in this area and will include working with partners and the voluntary sector. This can be funded from within existing budgets for financial inclusion.	As previously agreed, additional funding of £1.15m was set aside to increase the funds available to support residents. To date only a small amount of this additional funding has been spent and therefore it is proposed that this can be managed from within the additional funding already agreed. Further reports will give an update on the balance of this funding.
Economic Recovery - Investment of £530k in creating places and an environment in which visitors can safely return to the city centre in the short term, making some immediate changes to footstreets, encouraging walking and cycling along with	£359k to be funded from opening high streets and emergency active travel grants with the balance of £171k to be funded from the non-recurring reallocation of budgets outlined in paragraph 27 below.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Proposal for funding</b>
communications support to ensure effective public information activity.	
Corporate Recovery - Additional Health & Safety Measures estimated at £50k, including any changes to access to buildings and deep cleaning.	To be funded from the non-recurring reallocation of budgets outlined in paragraph 27 below.
Corporate Recovery - Bring forward planned investment of £500k in ICT infrastructure and equipment to allow continued remote working and to ensure robust infrastructure is in place.	To be funded by bringing forward ICT capital development programme funding from 2021/22.
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,430</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>	
existing budgets	750
Government grants	359
Reprioritisation	321
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>1,430</b>

#### Financial impact of recovery priorities

25. A number of other priorities have been identified and these areas will be considered further at future meetings.
26. These priorities include the setting up of local Outbreak Control Plans and contact tracing which will be funded from the recently announced grant of £733k and is subject to a further report. Other areas include the development of an adult learning and skills plan linked to the economic recovery plan for the city, additional cleansing of the public realm, the use of community hubs and ensuring a robust and resilient Public Health service.
27. The initial review of budgets has identified that planned growth in a number of areas, including climate change, waste services, northern forest and local transport plan has been delayed. Therefore, whilst work will continue on these projects, the delay in starting means that not all the funding allocated in the February budget report will be needed in this financial year. This will allow the funding originally identified for these areas to be reallocated, on a one off basis in this financial year, to support

the emerging priorities in the recovery plan. However, this may also require further growth to be allocated in the 2021/22 budget process.

28. There is also a need to consider planned capital investment to ensure this is consistent with the recovery plan. This work is ongoing and again will be considered at a future meeting.

## Consultation

29. Alongside the Recovery and Renewal Strategy, the council will develop and deliver a single programme of resident engagement (Our Big Conversation), taking place throughout the year, which brings together consultation and engagement with residents to inform multiple strategies, projects and schemes. This will support the coordinated input from residents into the design and delivery of activities needed to support recovery. The ambition is that all residents should have the opportunity to contribute.

## Council Plan

30. As noted above, the Recovery and Renewal Strategy outlines activities for the next year to allow the continued achievement of Council Plan outcomes. The table of activities within the Strategy are mapped to the individual outcomes of the council plan to which they relate.

## Implications

- **Financial** – included in the body of the report
- **Human Resources** – The impacts on staff of individual changes to services will be assessed at a service level. The Organisational Development Plan at Annex 4 proposes a set of activities to support the development of staff as we adjust to new ways of working.
- **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** – included in the body of the report
- **Crime and Disorder** – No specific impacts identified.
- **Information Technology** – included in the content of Annex 1

## Risk Management

31. 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

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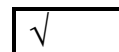
Report  
Approved



Date 16/06/20

**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>

## Annexes

Annex 1 – CYC Recovery and Renewal Strategy

Annex 2a – One Year Transport and Place Plan

Annex 2b – Parking Incentives

Annex 3 – Recovery from coronavirus: A community-based approach

Annex 4 – Recovery and Renewal Organisational Development Plan

Annex 5 – Schools Update