
Executive

14 January 2021

Report of the Chief Operating Officer
Portfolio of the Leader of the Council

City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy – January 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, an update is provided on the latest public health context, in addition to a review of economic and place activities over the last 6 months. The announcement of a further period of lockdown on 4 January, whilst entirely necessary, clearly creates additional challenges in supporting the city and for the continuity of services. Planning in response to this latest development is continuing at the time of writing.
3. It is highly likely given the fast-changing nature of the pandemic that some of the information within this report will have changed between publication and the Executive meeting. Updates will, therefore, be given at the meeting.

Recommendations

4. Executive is asked to:
 - a. Note the contents of the report
 - b. Note the steps taken to date to respond to the pandemic that are set out in Annex 1.
 - c. Executive endorse the recommendation of the Executive Member for Finance and Performance in November 2020 (outlined in Annex 1) to :-
 - i. Implement a discretionary grants scheme providing support to the businesses outlined and at the levels indicated in the paper to run until March 2022.
 - ii. Instruct the Head of Economic Growth to develop more detailed proposals for a business support voucher scheme

- for consideration at a subsequent Executive Member Decision Session
- iii. Allocate a preliminary budget of £200k from the Additional Relief Grant (ARG) funding to fund future activity aimed to accelerate economic activity during the next reopening
 - iv. That officers bring back a further report to the relevant Executive Member Decision meeting to consider amendments to the Additional Relief Grant ARG eligibility criteria.

Background

5. On 25 June 2020, 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.
6. 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.
7. 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	One Year Transport	Skills and Employment	Recovery from coronavirus: A	Organisational Development Plan

Plan	and Place Plan	Plan	community- based approach	
Tourism Marketing Plan				

Latest Outbreak Update

8. Given the rapidly changing context and increase in cases in York, an update on the latest situation will be given verbally to the Executive at the meeting.
9. Since the middle of December, the number of cases of Covid in York has risen rapidly. The latest officially validated rate (on 29.12.20) was 380.8 new Covid cases per 100,000 of population within a rolling 7 day period. The national and regional averages at this date were 476.9 and 222.7 respectively. Indications are that the rate has continued to rise since then.
10. This places York in a position where cases are rising fast from what was a low base. On the current trend, the number of cases will surpass the national average relatively quickly. It is likely that the new variant of coronavirus is contributing to this increase in cases.
11. York was moved into the Very High tier (Tier 3) of restrictions on 31 December. On 4 January, the Prime Minister announced a further period of national lockdown, expected to last at least into mid-February. The full details of what this means can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home?priority-taxon=774cee22-d896-44c1-a611-e3109cce8eae>
12. The Council has continued to work with national and local partners to bolster the testing capacity within the city. A new provision of Lateral Flow Antigen testing started just before Christmas, with residents able to book a test without symptoms if they are:
 - a. aged 18 or over, and they come into contact with lots of other people as part of their work in the hospitality, retail, or transport sectors (including taxi drivers)
 - b. aged 18 or over, and they work with, live with, or support those most at risk from coronavirus
 - c. a pupil of a secondary school in York, and their school has advised them to be tested
13. This testing provides results within a few hours and allows those who may be most at risk of spreading the infection to ensure they are not Covid-positive.

14. Rollout of vaccinations has begun, with the Moor Lane car park being used as an open air mass vaccination site. The recent approval of the Oxford vaccine provides additional hope of a rapid deployment of vaccinations. The Council will continue to support health partners in the rollout of vaccination, ensuring prioritisation for those most at risk.
15. In addition to following the restrictions relevant to York, it is important that all residents continue to follow the Hands, Face, Space guidance and minimise non-essential contact which could spread the virus.

Recovery Updates

Economic

16. A full update on the activities to support the city's economy over the past 6 months, and a look ahead at activities to support recovery, is provided in Annex 1.

Communities

17. The community hubs have continued to operate over the Christmas period, with relatively low levels of demand. This has begun to increase, however, and it is expected that the need for support will increase further as we move into lockdown once more.
18. Schools worked hard over the Christmas break, with colleagues from the council and health partners, to put in place testing arrangements for returning secondary students. These operated alongside the symptom-free tests noted in paragraph 12 above. However, the decision to close schools from 5 January requires schools to support online learning. The council will now work with schools to support this transition as far as possible.
19. Teams in Public Health and Adult Social Care have been working closely with the Hospital to support patients, particularly on discharge from hospital. The additional arrangements put in place to provide accommodation for people with care needs who have tested positive for Covid or need to isolate have been extremely useful. There remain significant pressures on the hospital and continuing to ensure the discharge pathways are well supported remains a priority for both the council and health partners.

Corporate

20. A key priority for the council is to ensure continuity of front line service delivery where staff are impacted by Covid (either directly infected or through the need to self-isolate or support others). Prioritisation protocols

used in the first lockdown are being revisited to ensure continuity wherever possible.

21. It is highly likely that some areas of service provision will be impacted by lockdown restrictions and a full list of these will be available on the council's website as soon as possible.

Council Plan

22. 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

23. 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 Date 06/01/21
Approved

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All

Annexes

Annex 1 - Update on the city's response to Covid-19

Annex 1a - Movement Insights analysis

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/ielIssueDetails.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/ielIssueDetails.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>

CYC Recovery and Renewal Strategy update – October

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ielIssueDetails.aspx?IId=60724&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI56530>

City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy - November Update

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/documents/s144127/Recovery%20and%20Renewal%20Update%20-%20November%202020%20v0.3.pdf>

City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy – December update

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ielIssueDetails.aspx?IId=61412&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI57153>