



**Notice of a public meeting of
Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management
Committee**

To: Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair),
S Barnes, Hunter, Hollyer, Rowley, D Taylor, Musson
and Pearson

Date: Monday, 6 July 2020

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Remote Meeting

AGENDA

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2020.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm on Thursday 2 July 2020**. Members of the public can speak on agenda items or matters within the remit of the Committee.

To register to speak please contact Democratic Services, on the details at the foot of the agenda. You will then be advised on the procedures for dialling into the remote meeting.

Webcasting of Remote Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this remote public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The remote public meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During the coronavirus pandemic, we've made some changes to the way we run council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. The Council's Response to Covid 19 (Pages 7 - 34)

This report presents, at Annex 1, the Council's immediate response to the Covid 19 pandemic, as submitted to and considered by the Executive at its meeting on 7 May 2020 and provides an opportunity for this Committee to reflect upon how the Council and in part the City responded to the pandemic in terms of its impact on York and its residents.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name: Louise Cook

Telephone: (01904) 551031 or (01904) 553631

E-mail: louise.cook@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

**Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim (Polish)
własnym języku.**

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 (01904) 551550

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City Of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	9 March 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), Hunter, Musson, Rowley, D Taylor, Vassie, Wann, and Norman (Substituting for Cllr Barnes)
Apologies	Councillor Barnes

68. Declarations of Interest

At this point, Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, prejudicial interest or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

69. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 10 February 2020 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record, subject to the following amendment to the second resolution to minute 62 (Supporting and Engaging Local Councillors) as set out below:

- 'ii. That discussions be held with the political groups and across council officers about the potential barriers faced by prospective and current Councillors to be able to perform the various roles and duties associated with being an Elected Member.'

70. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

71. E-Democracy Update Report

Members considered the report and noted the clarification provided in the report regarding Schedule 12 of the Local

Government Act 1972; that set out that those taking part in a council meeting must be physically “present” where the meeting was taking place. The question of if this applied only to voting members of a meeting was raised and whether or not none voting participants could join a meeting remotely if their identity could be sufficiently proved. Officers noted that they would seek clarification and update the Committee on this. Members raised a desire for the Local Government Act 1972 to be updated to allow for none physical presence at meetings, noting the technological ability to do this and the potential benefits, such as if meetings cannot take place in person and the ability to offer involvement to those that cannot travel to a meeting.

Discussion also took place around the updating of technology to allow for video conferencing in meeting rooms, as well as, the current use of webcasting.

Resolved:

- i. That Officers seek clarity on whether none voting participants can join Council meetings remotely.
- ii. That the Chair will write to the Executive Leader asking that he write to the Minister for Local Government on behalf of Members, regarding the updating of the Local Government 1972 Act to allow for the remote participation in meetings.
- iii. That the Chair and Vice Chair liaise with the Communication team and Members of the Committee to advertise the availability of Council meetings.

Reason: To support the effectiveness of Council meetings and to improve engagement with Council meetings.

72. Update Report on Public Engagement and Involvement

The Committee were joined by Council Officers, as well as, Helen Graham and Phil Bixley (both from My Future York). To consider a report on the approach taken to improve the opportunities for York residents, business representatives, and visitors to engage in local decision making.

Discussion took place around the level of engagement the Council was involved in or entering into, as well as, the challenges associated with making sure each engagement

feeds into another to create a cohesive whole, whilst also effectively disseminating the content received. Officers highlighted the Engagement Principles co-created with My Future York and used on projects such as My Castle Gateway and would be used in My City Centre.

Wide ranging engagement was highlighted as crucial, as Members were encouraged to consider the promotion of the cities democratic culture. Members highlighted the need for inclusivity in engagement, making sure engagement allowed those that were easiest to ignore, such as those that were time poor to be able to engage in decision making. It was pointed out that the Council had many teams that communicated regularly with those that could be considered the easiest to ignore in many different capacities, therefore it was considered whether these connections that different Council teams had could be capable of facilitating feedback into larger engagements. The Committee also raised whether the Council could facilitate different networks throughout the city to communicate more effectively.

Members also raised the use of council magazines in other cities as a way of keeping residents engaged. It was noted that some Parish Councils have regular magazines and Members considered whether or not a joined up publication for the city could be effective. Officers noted the quartile Our City publication and that it could be considered for more regular publication with sufficient resources.

Resolved:

- i. That further updates on public engagement and involvement be brought to the Committee.
- ii. That the Committee supported the facilitating of a larger networking event as part of My York Central to be organised by the Council and My Future York.
- iii. That the Committee requested that consideration be given to how to identify best practice on engagement within the Council.

Reasons: In order to support and remain updated on the direction of engagement and involvement at the Council.

73. **Overview Report on Corporate Branding**

Members considered a report on the Council's corporate branding and the difference made since the introduction of the Council's style guide. This incorporated the evidence from research conducted by the NHS, that identified an artificial distance created by having lots of branding that were distinct from the main NHS brand. It was noted that the Council was now using its style guide when different brands were looking at the creation of new logos, in order to wherever possible create a more consistent branding throughout the Council.

Members noted that due to the number of brands used in Council services it could be hard for residents to know what services the Council provided. Where possible Members considered whether a more proactive approach should be taken to update brands in line with the style guide, noting that some services benefited from having distinctive branding and that branding shouldn't be changed if it would have a detrimental effect on the service. Members questioned the opinion of the Council's brand with residents and considered what effect the Council's brand would have on the opinion of services. The Council's logo was questioned firstly as to whether or not services using distinctively different logos did this as they did not consider the Council's logo as able to represent them, and secondly as potentially not representing York's narrative and that the logo could be seen to only represent the cities past.

Resolved:

- i. That the Committee stated its support for the Communications team to bring brands into line with the council's brand where it was appropriate to do so.
- ii. That the Committee stated its support for the Communications team to develop a wider branding strategy.

Reason: In order for the Committee to show its support for the approach taken to corporate branding at City of York Council (CYC) and support a proactive approach to a more consistent corporate branding where appropriate.

74. Update Report on Implementation of Outstanding Recommendations from Financial Inclusion Scrutiny Review

Resolved:

- i. That Recommendation ii. be brought back to the Committee by the relevant officer when it has been fully implemented to be signed off.

Reason: To raise awareness of those recommendations which are still to be fully implemented.

75. Report of the Chair of the Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee

The Chair of the Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee introduced the report and outlined what the Committee had been involved in over the previous six months.

CCTV procurement was raised for the use in individual wards, the Chair of the Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee noted that he would raise it with the Safer York Partnership, at the next meeting of the Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee. Officers also noted that CCTV was being considered on a corporate level and that Members could discuss this with them.

Resolved:

- i. That the Chair's report and update be noted.

Reason: To keep the Committee updated on the work of the Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

76. Work Plan 2019/20

Members considered the Draft Work Plan for 2019-20. It was agreed that the Three-Monthly update on implementation of day-one absence scheme be postponed from the April to 11 May 2020 meeting, in order to allow for sufficient time for reporting to be collated.

The Chair also updated the Committee on the outcome of the Committee's call in recommendation regarding inclusive growth.

Members enquired about whether any potential new Senior Corporate Management Structure would be brought to the Committee to feed into. Officers confirmed that any restructure would be the responsibility of the Head of Paid Services and that it would be their decision to bring any consultation to the Committee on this.

Resolved:

- i. That the draft work plan be approved, subject to the Three-Monthly update on implementation of day-one absence scheme being postponed to 11 May 2020.
- ii. That the Director of Governance would express to the Interim Head of Paid Services the Committees desire to be engaged with the formulation of any potential new Senior Corporate Management Team Structure.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee has a planned programme of work in place. Also to allow the Committee to aid in any potential new Senior Corporate Management Team Structure.

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.32 pm and finished at 7.42 pm].



**Customer & Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee****6 July 2020**

Report of the Director of Governance

The Council's Response to Covid 19**Summary**

1. This report presents, at Annex 1, the Council's immediate response to the Covid 19 pandemic as submitted to and considered by the Executive at its meeting on 7 May 2020.

Background

2. This is the first public meeting of this Committee since the nation began lockdown in response to the worldwide pandemic. As such it provides an opportunity for the Committee to reflect upon how the Council and in part the City responded to the pandemic in terms of its impact on York and its residents;
3. At a second public meeting later the same day, the Committee will have a separate opportunity to look forward and comment upon the recovery work and plan being undertaken by the Executive, put in place on 25 June 2020.

Consultation

4. No specific consultation was required on the preparation of this report. However, all Scrutiny Committee Chairs have been involved in the development of the agenda for this meeting, considering it invaluable for this Committee to recommence its work, as lockdown eases, with an understanding of what the landscape post Covid 19 looks like.
5. The Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Public Health and relevant Corporate Directors have been invited to attend this first meeting to present summaries of the work that has taken place in their areas.

Format of Meeting

6. Firstly, the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Public Health will give an introductory overview of the Council's response to Covid 19. Then, each Corporate Director will be asked to give up to a 5 minute summary presentation (preferably no more than 3 minutes) in their area, covering:
 - What non-essential work stopped during lockdown;
 - What new work had to start;
 - What worked well and what could be improved

Time will be allowed for Members to question after each presentation

Options

7. There are no specific options before the Committee, as this business presents an opportunity for Members to consider and identify any lessons learnt from the Covid 19 experience, in light of the information contained in Annex 1 and of the presentations to be made by relevant Corporate Directors.

Analysis

8. No further analysis is necessary in relation to the issue before the Committee, other than the information contained in Annex 1.

Council Plan 2019-23

9. The Covid 19 pandemic is material to all aspects of the current Council Plan, given that it has impacted upon and will continue to impact upon, as the Council and City emerge through recovery, the delivery of Council and City services.

Implications

10. The relevant implications associated with consideration of this important issue are addressed in Annex 1, which sets out the Council's response to Covid 19.
11. In terms of legal implications associated with decision making, the Government enacted emergency rules giving Councils powers to establish remote meetings, as of 4 April 2020. This Council's provisions can be found from the front page of the City of York Council website.

Risk Management

12. Any appropriate risks associated with or arising from the Council's response to the pandemic are identified in Annex 1.

Recommendations

13. Members are asked to consider the information received, at Annex 1, and from the presentations made at the meeting, and identify any next steps in terms of lessons learnt to take into account for future consideration.

Reason: To ensure that proper and effective scrutiny is in place in relation to the Council's response to Covid 19.

Contact Details

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Director of Governance

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Report Approved **Date** 24/06/2020

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Janie Berry, Director of Governance – legal implications

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Council's Response to Covid 19 considered by the Executive on 7 May 2020

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Executive**7 May 2020**

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

Update on Coronavirus response**Summary**

1. Responding to Coronavirus has required a complete transformation of the way the council operates, reprioritising support to those most in need and to facilitate the ongoing delivery of critical services. Over the past 2 months, a huge number of changes have been made, supporting the city's wider response to keep people safe.
2. This paper summarises some of the activities and changes undertaken.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Executive notes this update, in particular the potential financial implications and that further reports will be brought to the committee highlighting any further action that may be needed.

Background

4. When a new strain of coronavirus, Covid-19, was noted in Wuhan, China, in late 2019, few could have realised the global significance of this illness. As a new strain, there is no immunity within the general population, which has led to a rapid spread across most parts of the world. At the time of writing, it is estimated that there have been around 3 million identified cases and over 200,000 confirmed deaths worldwide. In the UK, over 20,000 people have died in hospital, with some suggestions that the total figure, including deaths not in hospital, could already be twice that.
5. The first cases in the UK were identified in York on 31 January. Two members of the same family, who had both recently been in the Hubei

province of China, were taken for treatment and quarantine in Newcastle.

6. Countries across the globe have responded to reduce the likelihood of infection, through social distancing and lockdown measures. In the UK, initial advice at the beginning of February was to call NHS111 if you had developed symptoms of a new continuous cough or a fever and had travelled to one of the affected countries recently. By mid-March the advice had changed to avoid all non-essential travel, and on 23 March, the UK entered what is commonly termed “lock-down”, meaning people are to stay at home apart from leaving for only exceptional reasons (essential food/supplies, healthcare, work if essential, and exercise once a day.)
7. The degree of change required across the city and in the way the council operates as a result of coronavirus cannot be overstated. In a short period, the lives of every resident have been impacted and every service has been affected. All council officers are very aware of the human cost, in terms of those who are gravely ill or have died, or the impacts on people’s jobs and freedoms.
8. The context of this report is, therefore, a set of circumstances unlike anything we have seen before and is quite clearly not “business as usual” in any way.
9. This challenge, however, has seen an incredible response in York, from residents, communities and organisations. The city is indebted to those individuals, including Council Officers, who have worked tirelessly to keep people safe and supported at this time.
10. All reference to meetings after 23 March are virtual – that is to say, carried out via Skype or other video/phone conferencing systems.

Emergency Response

11. The council’s immediate priority was to both connect the most vulnerable to the help they needed and where possible, and provide assistance to local businesses, but recognising we wouldn’t be able to help everyone. In response, we provided a package of support for vulnerable residents, including residents who have been impacted financially and local small / micro businesses.

12. To achieve this, we identified and redeployed staff from non-essential roles into priority areas, including community, care, frontline or customer service roles, in order to ensure that we could quickly distribute support to those who most needed it. The Council has also been recruiting temporary staff or encouraging staff back from retirement to cover gaps.
13. The commitment and response from staff has been exemplary, with many staff working weekends and on evenings to ensure residents and communities are supported across the city. The Council's Executive and Corporate Management Team have been issuing regular communications on staff, in order to highlight support on offer to them during this period and to thank staff for their efforts.
14. As part of the North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), information sharing commenced on 31st January and the emergency response arrangements were enacted fully on 3rd March. The LRF brings together partners from health, police, fire and rescue, local authorities, military and a range of other organisations to coordinate responses to emergencies. It has a range of protocols, used in response to all emergency situations, for ensuring information is passed between the relevant agencies and Government, that risks are identified and addressed, and that action is taken in a coordinated way. In doing so, the emergency response can be coordinated at a sub-regional, regional and national level, working across all responding organisations.
15. City of York Council is a full part of these arrangements. It does, however, retain the decision-making responsibilities around council services and their safe operation. On 16 March, daily coronavirus situation reports began to be completed by all service areas within the council. These are continuing (although reduced to twice a week). These provide detailed information on the changing circumstances to allow decisions to be taken based on the best intelligence. Internal Gold and Silver command meetings were established (initially in person and then via Skype) to provide coronavirus-specific decision-making forums. Gold provides strategic decisions, involving the Interim Head of the Paid Service, Directors and leads for corporate services. Silver includes representatives from all service areas and takes tactical or operational decisions. Subgroups were established to focus on key risk areas:
 - a. Children
 - b. Adults
 - c. Business Support

- d. Communities (Community Hubs/Volunteering)
 - e. Customers
 - f. Finance & Governance
 - g. Human Resources
16. Daily briefing packs from Gold & Silver have been created for key partners, members and local MPs. This records communication requirements, changes to messages and maintains a live log of links to changes to communications as an easy reference for customer services and web teams when answering questions.
17. Executive and other elected members have been kept involved in a number of ways. At Executive level, regular discussions have taken place including on all key decisions and other significant matters (see Governance below). Weekly meetings with Group Leaders have also been held to ensure all elected members are aware of events, and a daily communications briefing (see Communications, below) has been provided to all members.
18. The council also takes part in a wide range of regular meetings with regional and national partners, including NHS, Police and Government Agencies and Departments. Through the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and Local Enterprise Partnerships, the Council has been lobbying for access to greater resources and clarity from government, in terms of guidance, funding and PPE. We have also been lobbying Government officials on behalf of the business community, including greater support for York's self-employed. The council will continue to use all channels open to make clear the challenges for the city and draw in all the support which is required.
19. These arrangements have worked effectively with the council responding rapidly to the changing operating context in tandem with key partners.

Business Continuity and Prioritisation

20. In the week commencing 16 March, all staff were asked to work from home wherever possible, reflecting government advice for people to avoid any non-essential travel. This required significant change in terms of normal working practices and service delivery, but rapid work by the ICT department in liaison with services made this possible

extremely quickly, in line with prioritisation and resourcing decisions as described below.

21. Recognising the absolute need for prioritisation of services to protect health and wellbeing, a prioritisation exercise has been undertaken to identify the critical service areas which must continue to deliver as a matter of urgency and determine what support is required to facilitate them working in whatever way necessary.
22. As some services areas are prioritised, some service areas have become less immediate priorities, either as a result of reduced demand, becoming impossible to deliver within Social Distancing guidance or as a result of the greater need in other areas. In these cases, staff have been redeployed into priority areas to support the response.

Support enacted and service changes

23. Across the council, all services have changed. Each area has had to rework business processes and approaches to work remotely and support staff members working in different ways. Where services have been suspended or changed in nature, the situation will continue to be reviewed to ensure they can resume as soon as it is safe and possible to do so.
24. Summarised below are the key areas of change and support provided to the city by the council.

Public Health

25. The Public Health Team has acted as lead advisors to the response at a city level. The team provides expert advice to support decision making, whilst coordinating key aspects of the response such as the availability and supply of Personal Protective Equipment and supporting the development of testing arrangements.
26. The ongoing statutory responsibilities of the team have continued, although some aspects of health screening have been temporarily halted. In line with Government advice, the National Child Measurement Programme has been temporarily halted, as well as NHS Health Checks for adults. The Health Visiting Service has moved to prioritise essential support to the most vulnerable, utilising virtual appointments for antenatal and new baby visits. The School Nursing service is

prioritising safeguarding and specialist school nursing, with phone and text support for other queries.

27. Sexual Health Services are prioritising urgent work only, utilising phone consultation where possible and signposting to pharmacies or online services. Testing for Sexually Transmitted Infection are being carried out using postal kits. Drug and Alcohol Services are prioritising support to those most at risk, utilising telephone calls where possible. Clients receiving Opioid Substitute Therapy continue to be supported with weekly prescriptions.
28. Stop Smoking Support is being provided over the phone, with Nicotine Replacement Therapy being delivered by post.

Adults

29. The key focus of the work in Adults' Social Care has been making sure that the system is supporting quick discharge from hospital to free up capacity, whilst galvanising support in the community to ensure people are safe and supported.
30. The Council has increased capacity throughout the home care, residential care, nursing care and independent living sectors to cope with predicted and elongated surge of demand. Capacity in home care and residential remains adequate to meet demands at present. Further contingencies have been identified should these become necessary.
31. A social media campaign has been developed aimed at bringing more recruits into the sector to deal with staffing issues. Staffing levels are currently stable. Volunteers are also being used to increase the capacity of social care provision as part of the council's call for volunteers.
32. Collaboration across the voluntary and community sectors has been extremely useful. As just one example, working with the CVS, Move the Masses charity have delivered prescriptions, made welfare calls, paired people to receive calls & letters, and identified additional new volunteers. CVS social prescribing practitioners and primary care link workers are working at full capacity, liaising with GP's on welfare calls to the vulnerable, linking in with the council's community hubs.
33. Like many places, PPE remains a challenge. Stocks are low for some social care providers. The council is acting as a local hub for

distribution where these are critically low, working with the LRF for emergency distribution.

34. The council is working with the care sector and CQC around the testing programme for workers in the care sector.
35. In housing, the focus has been on ensuring safe, adequate accommodation is available for all, regardless of their circumstances allowing them to isolate safely. There have been significant changes in respect of homelessness services, with the need to get all rough sleepers off the streets and new working and accommodation approaches at our homeless hostels. This has resulted in more people being housed away from the centres and in hotels. Social distancing has created additional demands in terms of supporting tenants and managing some difficult behaviour.
36. Additional resource has gone into bringing void properties to a condition where they can be re-let. This is increasing capacity so that residents of the hostels can be offered a more permanent home and free up capacity in the hostels to respond to any increase in demand and facilitate social distancing.
37. As per normal, Housing staff have continued to work with Adult Social Care colleagues to support the agreed 'pathways' for people leaving hospital, in order to support their independence and provide care where appropriate. By doing so, we have helped to create more capacity at the hospital during the crisis.

Children

38. Protecting children is paramount at this time and one of the statutory responsibilities of the Council. Children's Services have continued to prioritise safeguarding and services have been entirely re modelled in a period of less than a week to create a virtual child protection system. All children have been risk assessed and visits have continued where possible. All other aspects of the system are operating with a wide variety of meetings between safeguarding partners moved online.
39. Prior to coronavirus, an external review of statutory safeguarding partnerships had been commissioned and this has now concluded with

partners agreeing an action plan. This has provided some initial thoughts on retaining some virtual meetings in the future.

40. The council continues to prioritise its role as corporate parents and is working with children in our care and those that have left it to ensure they are safe and supported at this time. All of these children have a family plan in place and the council is ensuring Show Me I Matter and Show Me I Still Matter have a strong voice.
41. It is recognised, however, that the number of referrals into the services is down due to lockdown and that there may well be an increase in demand once restrictions are lifted. It is imperative that everything possible is done to flatten this spike in referrals which has the potential to overwhelm the system in terms of resource and cost. Therefore, recovery planning has already been started to ensure that new ways of managing support needs are created, especially capitalising on the rise in community capacity.
42. The services have also maintained all aspects of improvement planning as, although Ofsted Inspection is currently paused, inspections are likely to resume as soon as Ofsted have identified their new model of operation.
43. Schools have remained open for the children of keyworkers, vulnerable children and those with Education, Health and Care Plans. This has included the Easter holidays and also ensuring children entitled to Free School Meals continue to be supported. Schools have also been required to deliver education virtually and take a broader pastoral role in relation to vulnerable children. Sufficient childcare (early years) is available currently for keyworkers, however, this sector is under significant financial pressure.
44. All of the above is being undertaken in a climate of limited central guidance and some challenges with national systems being developed late or not working effectively, such as the national free school meals system.

Economy and place

45. The council moved rapidly to support businesses and protect, as far as possible, York's economy. The Government's Business Support Grants, and the Business Rates relief scheme, have been swiftly administered within the Customer Services finance team to get most of

the money to businesses who need it. Over £100M is being paid out in direct grants or in business rates relief. Additionally, the Council has created a small and micro business fund to support those businesses who are not eligible for Government Support. Commercial rent has also been deferred to support the cash-flow of our commercial tenants.

46. In order to protect household waste collections, it was necessary to temporarily halt garden waste collections. This is to support the social distancing required and ensure we retain a healthy workforce to deliver the most critical services for York's public health. A recovery plan is being developed to identify when it will be possible to resume services.
47. Grass cutting and weed management in public areas has continued, as this has been possible to do whilst maintaining social distancing. Council parks remain open to support residents exercising.
48. Legislation is now in place to enforce commercial business closures as directed by Government. Environmental Health have seen an increase in volume of complaints about businesses not complying with Government guidelines. In response, the council has been working with local businesses to communicate the national social distancing guidance and where some businesses have remained open, council staff have visited to check safe working practices.
49. The Trading Standards and Scambusters teams have addressed the increased risk of coronavirus-related scams through awareness raising campaigns for businesses and residents.
50. Car park charges for key workers have been suspended in council-owned car parks.
51. The council has worked with bus operators to ensure a skeleton bus service is provided for key workers to travel and for all other essential travel.
52. Collaboration with bus operators has also enabled some bus drivers to be retained and redeployed as refuse vehicle drivers, as the council has worked to prioritise household and recycling collections.
53. To aid residents with social distancing when walking and cycling, the council has been identifying a limited number of places where we the council can temporarily widen foot paths in the short-term, in order to help alleviate this problem. This includes the closure of the west bound

lane over Castle Mills Bridge, which has been coned off to give extra room for cyclists and pedestrians to safely social distance, with further proposals being worked for Bishopthorpe Road.

54. In addition to these immediate measures, the council is also exploring opportunities how best to respond to these challenges in the medium to long term, and identifying opportunities to maintain the health benefits of low traffic and improved air quality in whatever the new normal looks like.

Customer Services

55. The council created a helpline for residents, allowing people to access help and support, actioned by the community hubs and volunteers. As at 24th April 2020 the customer centre had received the following through the emergency phone number and email address (covid19help@york.gov.uk):
- a. Calls – 1,886
 - b. Emails – 1,345
56. During the same period, the customer centre has continued to receive around 500 calls per day in relation to normal council services, which is about 35% lower than the usual average.
57. As a result of falling customer numbers and the need to maintain social distancing, the face-to-face customer centre closed on 2 April. Since then, the council has continued to receive all its enquiries via telephone and online.
58. Along with other tourist venues the council closed the Mansion House for all use.
59. Following national guidance, the Register Office suspended all activities except death registrations. These registrations are currently being completed through phone appointments. The government relaxed its requirements for a birth registration to take place in order to claim related benefits. Weddings and other celebrations, including Citizenship ceremonies have been postponed until restrictions on social gatherings and social distancing have been lifted.
60. Due to the need to protect health for families, funeral directors and staff, it was necessary initially to limit the number of mourners attending, and then from 9th April 2020 to stop public use of the chapels

inside the crematorium. Instead, an outside covered area has been created where close family members can attend a service. Whilst this is not a decision anyone would have wished to take, it is necessary at this point but will continue to be reviewed as the situation changes.

61. The ICT teams have been facilitating the wholesale shift of many teams working remotely. This has required build and provision of over 100 additional laptops, development of solutions for terminals to be used at home and providing over 150 phones. In total, 1450 staff are using CYC equipment to connect to our ICT systems, with many more using their own machines through Citrix. Additionally, a text service database has been established to allow urgent messages to go out to staff mobiles.
62. Additional Wifi access points have been provided to expand the coverage of wireless connectivity at the testing station in York at Poppleton Bar Park and Ride site. Overall, the council's ICT infrastructure has proved to be resilient and the use of telephone and video conferencing has become mainstream and effective within a very short period of time.
63. Within the customer services team, in addition to processing the business support funding, the teams have also been supporting individual residents. Executive agreed to expand the York Financial Assistance Scheme to create a £1.2m support fund for individuals facing hardship. Additionally, the Government's hardship scheme has been delivered for each customer receiving Council Tax Support, giving them a further £150 off their bill. Between 23rd March and 24th April the council has dealt with:
- 431 Council Tax Support applications
 - 117 applications for emergency food vouchers
 - 75 York Financial Assistance Scheme payments
 - 96 Discretionary Housing Payment claims - 20% up on the same period last year.
64. Rent increases for council tenants have been deferred for three months.

Communities

65. The Council moved swiftly to establish 9 community hubs across the city and ensure food, medical and emotional support was available

to vulnerable people across the city. Following a city-wide call for volunteers, over 3000 residents have come forward to assist in the response and support vulnerable people in the communities – where possible these have been used to support community efforts but the response was so overwhelming some have not been deployed due to the lack of capacity in the voluntary sector to support them. This capacity needs to be expanded as part of recovery planning

66. Hundreds of food parcels and meals are being delivered daily. The city-wide operation encompasses York's foodbank, the Council's community hubs, community meal providers and local food businesses to ensure people get the food they need.
67. To service the community hubs with food for the medically shielded, the Council has created a central depot with volunteer drivers and vehicles to transport goods to the hubs. There, food boxes are put together and delivered to people identified through the Council's dedicated support line.
68. From making phone calls to thousands of residents, the volunteers in the hubs are building a picture of the amount of food needed and how urgently, meeting special dietary needs and adding to the Government-supplied food.
69. A Council team has been set up to manage food purchasing and donations. It is buying food for the hubs from local suppliers and is shopping locally for those with special dietary requirements. It has also put in place a system of pre-loaded cards and a supermarket email voucher system to support local shopping. The council's support line is also helping people who can afford to buy their shopping but can't get a delivery slot, or people who can't order online. With the help of a local news provider, a list of businesses which are able to deliver food and other services has been shared with all residents.
70. Following national guidance, libraries and sports centres have closed. However, in support of residents, the council has awarded an extra £17k to Explore to expand the range of digital resources available during lockdown. Over 7000 daily newspaper and magazine titles are available free of charge.

Human Resources (HR)

71. The main focus within HR has been to support staff in moving to different working arrangements, be that temporary redeployment or through changed services. Staff members have also volunteered to work within the hubs helping to coordinate food and supplies to those most in need across the city.
72. To ensure all staff are supported during changed ways of working, a staff helpline has been created, in addition to an information line with latest information for staff. Trade Unions have been consulted on activities, with their help and support gratefully received.
73. A recruitment campaign to increase the numbers of staff within waste services received hundreds of applications on the first morning. Specialist drivers have also been seconded from First Group to bolster the number of drivers for waste vehicles.
74. We are focusing on the ongoing health, safety and wellbeing of staff, providing guidance and support as well as working to coordinate coronavirus testing for key workers.

Finance

75. Coronavirus has reset the financial position of the council. It has been necessary to rapidly provide funding to services in support of vulnerable people and reprioritise budgets to create the financial support packages noted above.
76. A total of £4.7m has been received in central Government support for the costs associated with the coronavirus response. However, initial estimates suggest the cost to the council will be around £20m, taking into account cost pressures, additional demand and reduced income. A further allocation of £1.6bn national funding has been announced but we do not as yet know how much of this we will receive. Payment of this second tranche of funding is due in May.
77. Through the reassignment of existing budgets and use of unallocated YFAS reserves, an additional £1m has been identified to support residents experiencing financial hardship. £1.1m of the Government funding has also been allocated to support small and micro businesses in the city who are not eligible for the Government's business grants.

78. A more detailed review of the financial implications is included in annex one to this report.

Governance

79. Due to the need for social distancing, all public meetings were suspended. Urgent Decision Making Guidance was developed to ensure rapid decisions could be made in accordance with the Council's statutory framework and council constitution. The Urgent Decision Making Guidance and the list of officer decisions made under the guidance since the beginning of lockdown has been uploaded to the website can be found here: <https://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy>.
80. Work is now underway to establish protocols for remote meetings, leading up to the next Executive meeting on 7 May. The Planning and Licensing Committees will move to remote meetings following this.

Communications

81. The council prioritised coronavirus above all other communications over the past 2 months. A specific emergency response communications plan has been put in place to ensure everyone in the city is provided with accurate information as quickly as possible. Communications requirements are set by decisions taken at Gold and Silver command meetings and with Executive at the portfolio holders meeting.
82. In addition to dedicated web and intranet pages with specific coronavirus information, regular communications include:
- a. Daily social media updates, shared on corporate channels and with partners, together with boosted social media posts to raise awareness of emergency funding and available grants
 - b. Daily press releases on service updates
 - c. Daily emails from the Interim Head of The Paid Service to all staff, repeated on webpages and on an automated response telephone line for staff who do not have access to emails.
 - d. Daily updates to all Councillors, partners, MPs and parish councils
 - e. Weekly briefings to city partner organisations, including Universities, colleges, Make it York, CVS, York Museums Trust, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Joseph Rowntree Foundation
 - f. A schedule of leaflets direct to all residents by post

83. New ways of communicating messages with different audiences have been introduced to help balance residents' and staff's use of social media with more traditional methods of communicating:
- A new opt-in weekly e-newsletter for residents, families and businesses
 - Free of charge adverts on Minister FM
 - Support for the local media to provide essential food distribution information, which in turn also supports our independents and the local economy promote their adapted services
 - Regular Executive and Director of Public Health interviews and call-ins scheduled with BBC Radio York
 - A Facebook live Q&A with leaders
 - A special edition of *Our City* has been sent to all residents
 - A weekly leader "thanks" letter to staff identified by the corporate leadership group
 - A regular letter to partners from the Leader/Deputy Leader/Interim Head of Paid Services thanking them for their support
84. Whilst there is a huge amount of information in what has been a fast-changing context, feedback from staff and partners has been positive, with members valuing the daily brief.
85. Recognising the need to motivate people under difficult circumstances, internal communications have also focussed on positive aspects of the response. Highlighting the efforts of the city, "Silver linings" emails have shown the positive impact of #clapforourcarers on our frontline workers, coordination of food support across the city, and the volunteers working with Age UK amongst many others.

Looking ahead

86. Whilst significant challenges remain and the suffering caused by coronavirus is far from over, the council is beginning to look at the next phase of recovery, to address the challenges to support getting York back on its feet.
87. Early indications suggest that York (like many places) will be significantly impacted over a prolonged period. It is likely that social distancing measures will have to stay in place in some form for the rest of 2020, which will have an impact on the health and wellbeing of York's residents alongside serious consequences for York's economy. Current

estimates suggest an impact on the global economy significantly greater than the economic crash of 2008. Some of York's key employment sectors of hospitality and tourism will continue to be affected.

88. Further work is needed to accurately assess the impact, then to identify and plan the city's response. It should be noted that, based on the financial information in this report, and the expected increase in demand for services as we start to move out of lockdown, this work will involve reprioritising council budgets, focussing resource on where there are greatest challenges and providing a new strategic plan for the council to work to over the coming months. It is quite possible that there will be some previous priorities that can't be delivered in the same way in the light of our new operating context.
89. A Recovery Plan is being developed (aligning with regional recovery activity through the LRF) which will outline the risks and challenges of the emerging situation, with actions in response and opportunities based on lessons learned during the emergency response. Clearly, this plan will take into consideration and align with Government advice and national plans for recovery. It will be used to inform a review of the existing Council Plan in order to produce an Operational Recovery Plan to guide the council over the next 6 – 9 months.
90. Amongst what have been exceptionally challenging circumstances, there are numerous examples of innovative and effective processes developed to respond to the situations arising. There is a recognition that some of these new ways of working may be preferable for the delivery of services in the future and should be retained as far as possible. The Recovery Plan will identify these areas of opportunity (such as virtual meetings, more online delivery, more streamlined approval processes) and assess the wider impacts to ensure compliance with necessary corporate standards and statutory requirements.
91. For all staff and councillors, like many people, the past months have been extremely challenging. However, staff and councillors, working alongside volunteers, businesses and other organisations have shown the best of York. The city has pulled together to support each other. Whilst there remains an enormous challenge ahead, the spirit, resilience and kindness shown will stand the city in good stead. The

Interim Head of the Paid Service would like to thank all our staff for their incredible work.

Council Plan

92. Whilst the council has continued to attempt to deliver services and projects in support the council plan outcomes, clearly this is not business as usual at present and, as such, a specific focus on responding to the coronavirus outbreak has overtaken council plan delivery.
93. The Recovery Plan will assess how we continue to deliver against the outcomes of the plan in a changed context.

Implications

- **Financial** – included in the body of the report
- **Human Resources** – included in the body of the report
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** – support has focussed on those most vulnerable at this point
- **Legal** – included in the body of the report
- **Crime and Disorder** – included in the body of the report
- **Information Technology** - – included in the body of the report

Risk Management

94. A unique set of circumstances creates a huge range of significant risks for the council and the city. The response to date has prioritised supporting the health and wellbeing of our residents. This, in itself, creates economic and financial risks for many, in addition to concerns about the health impacts of lockdown. All of these are factors in the consideration of the Recovery Plan.

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Report **Date** 29/04/20
Approved

Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all **All**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex 1 – Financial Implications

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

- CQC – Care Quality Commission
- CVS – Centre for Voluntary Service
- FSM – Free School Meals
- ICT – Information and Communications Technology
- LRF – Local Resilience Forum
- NHS – National Health Service
- PPE – Personal Protective Equipment
- YFAS – York Financial Assistance Scheme

Introduction

This annex provides an update on the potential financial implications of the covid-19 pandemic and highlights the risks to the Council's financial resilience, should further Government support not be provided. It also provides details of the funding the Council has received to support communities and businesses at this time.

Prior to the global Coronavirus pandemic, the Council was in good financial health, with reserves above the recommended minimum level and had recently set a robust, fully funded budget for 2020/21.

There were pressures being experienced in both Adults and Children's that required additional budget growth, alongside the delivery of mitigating savings. Work is ongoing to complete the year end accounts and whilst the outturn position has not yet been finalised, it is anticipated that overall the 2019/20 outturn will be within the approved budget.

This early, high level view of the potential financial implications for the council will need to be updated on a regular basis. It is, however, clear that the government support received to date will not cover the additional costs and loss of income. Therefore if additional government support is not forthcoming action will be required in order to maintain a balanced budget.

Income

The Council is already seeing a significant loss of income, this includes a 96% drop in car parking income. A number of other measures were introduced in early April to offer financial assistance to businesses and residents, including:

- Deferral of the first quarter of commercial rents due
- Not increasing fees, charges and housing rents as planned from April 1st
- Introduction of a licensing fee and building regulations fee holiday

These measures will have different financial implications for individual residents and businesses and, as we progress through the current pandemic, there will need to be a balance between the viability of the payment of fees, charges and rent alongside the ongoing financial position of the council. It is estimated that the loss of income to the Council is approximately £950k per month, whilst the current restrictions are in place.

However, even if the current restrictions are lifted and the lockdown period ends, it will take some time for services to recover to previous levels. We

Annex 1 - Financial Implications of the Coronavirus

don't, at this time, know how lifestyles and preferences will change and whether some form of restrictions could continue for a longer period.

It is too early to reliably estimate the impact on income from Council Tax and Business Rates. The Council has increased the financial support available to residents experiencing hardship through the York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS) by a £1m increase in funding available through the use of the YFAS reserve and contingency. Many Councils are modelling a potential loss of 10% of council tax income for the year, which could be as much as £9m for York. 1% of council tax is approximately £860k, so even a small reduction in the collection rate would require further savings to be identified.

The impact on businesses could be more noticeable, and it is difficult to say how many of the businesses that are currently closed will reopen once restrictions are lifted. As outlined above, even once the restrictions are lifted it will take some time for normal trading activity to resume. Under the business rates retention scheme there is a safety net in place which would mean that once income dropped to a certain level, the Government would step in to fund the shortfall. However, the Council is a member of the North & West Yorkshire Business Rates Pool where all income is pooled and instead of paying a levy to Government we pay this to the Pool. It is unclear, at this stage, whether all Councils in the Pool would need to drop to safety net level before Government funding was provided. Under normal circumstances, if one Council in the pool suffered a loss of income this would be funded by the Pool.

Expenditure

The total additional costs incurred by the Council are also difficult to estimate at this early stage. Some costs have been seen in social care as a result of discharging more people from hospital into care settings to free up hospital beds and ensuring continued care and support for children and young people. There have been increased costs of temporary accommodation for people who are homeless and for rough sleepers. We have also continued to pay transport and other providers, whether service has been provided or not, in line with Government guidance. Additional costs have been seen within waste services to employ more drivers and other staff to ensure essential front line services can continue. We have also spent more on ICT equipment to ensure effective working from home.

Significant financial pressures are also being seen in schools and nurseries. The Government had previously announced that these should close for all children except those of critical workers and vulnerable children however we have seen relatively few parents choosing to send their children to school or nursery. Overall, the nursery sector relies heavily on fees paid by parents

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and whilst the Council has continued to pay early years funding, including making payment for the summer term in advance, many nurseries have not been able to remain open. It is crucial that enough places are maintained to meet need as and when the city returns to normal so the council will need to consider whether it can provide additional financial support to sustain these providers.

A number of other measures have also been implemented, including making payments in advance and paying on planned rather than actual care to try and support our providers.

The table below sets out our very early, high level estimates of the likely costs to the end of the current lockdown, should restrictions be lifted. Note that these are only initial estimates as there are too many unknown variables to do an accurate forecast.

Service Area	2020/21 £m
Adult Social Care – additional demand supporting local care providers, additional staffing and equipment, including PPE	6.8
Children’s Services - additional placements forecast, additional staffing, support to carers and providers	4.1
Homelessness - Additional costs for homeless accommodation	0.3
Communities - changes to delivery models to support communities remotely, support to providers	0.4
Waste - additional staffing costs and loss of income	0.6
Emergency Hardship Fund for small and micro businesses	1.1
Enhanced YFAS for resident support	1
Council Tax (assuming 10% reduction)	8.9
Business Rates (assuming 20% reduction)	7.7
Loss of income (including parking)	2.8
Non achievement of approved savings	0.75
Other, including staffing, ICT equipment, cleaning costs	0.5
Total	34.95
Less:	
Government support grant	4.7
YFAS reserve	0.4
Contingency	0.5
Share of further Government funding	5.7
Potential funding gap	23.65

Table 1 - High level estimate of financial impact of Coronavirus

Capital

In addition to the revenue pressures outlined, the Council also has a significant capital programme with total forecast spend of £560m over the next 5 years, including some key major projects such as York Central and Castle Gateway. Whilst the programme is fully funded through a combination of Government Grants, borrowing and other funding it is clear that a fundamental review of all schemes will be needed to assess any new risks as a result of the pandemic. This will include considering the overall purpose of the scheme and whether they are still financially viable given the risk to the overall economy. This is particularly crucial for those schemes that assumed the generation of capital receipts to fund expenditure.

Approved growth and savings

In February, the Council set its budget for the year ahead and agreed a number of growth and savings proposals that would deliver a balanced budget. Again, these will all need to be reviewed to consider where there is a risk to the delivery of these proposals. Whilst the Council has been fully occupied in responding to the pandemic no progress will have been made to implement the proposals. Some of the proposals may be able to continue and still deliver the required level of saving but it is expected that a number will now not be deliverable in this financial year. Therefore, over the coming weeks a review will be completed to assess all proposals and a revised 2020/21 budget will need to be reviewed and agreed over the summer.

Summary

In total, all the issues identified above could cost as much as £35m in the current financial year. To date, we have received £4.7m of support grant, with a further £5.7m recently announced and due to be received in May. Using the high level estimates and assumptions outlined in this paper, at this stage it is considered that the additional costs and loss of income could therefore result in a budget gap of some £24m.

The Council does have reserves, and these are being reviewed to identify where they can be released to support the current pressures. However, even with this review and the general reserve of £7.4m, it is likely that there will still be a funding gap that would result in the need to identify further savings to be delivered.

At this stage we are not experiencing cash flow issues however this could become an area of concern as the year progresses and may require additional controls to be introduced on any discretionary expenditure and

Annex 1 - Financial Implications of the Coronavirus

could mean that the Council would have to concentrate on providing statutory services only.

As the Council's Section 151 Officer, the Head of Corporate Finance and Commercial Procurement has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that the Council makes arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires a report to all Council members to be made by the s151 officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, if there is or is likely to be an unbalanced budget. However, the circumstances of a developing situation, such as this one, should be distinguished from the imminent or actual situation and therefore despite there being a potentially unbalanced budget an s114 notice is not being considered at this time. Such a notice is only given in the most serious circumstances and the process is governed under legislation. Given that every Council in the country is likely to be in the same position, the Government has announced its intention to review the issuing of s114 notices but the scale of financial challenge means that all s151 Officers across the country will be considering their responsibilities and what action they need to take, if any.

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