

**Executive**

**26 November 2020**

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

## **City of York Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy – November 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 implications of further lockdown are discussed with the latest information on council services, financial assistance for businesses and the council's test and trace arrangements.

### **Recommendations**

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

### **Background**

4. On 25<sup>th</sup> 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 second period of lockdown, an update on the latest situation will be given verbally to the Executive at the meeting.
- 8. Since the 7 day rate of cases per 100,000 of population in York peaked at 309.6 on 20 October, the rate has recently fallen to 176.6 (as at 6 November). The rate in York is below the national and regional averages and is currently among the lowest in the Yorkshire and Humber Region.
- 9. The percentage of people who test positive after taking a community based (Pillar 2) test in York has fallen to 10.2% (as of 9 November) after a peak of 18% (on 15 October). The rate in York is currently lower than national and regional averages.

10. On 5 November, national restrictions came into force limiting what people are allowed to do. For the duration of restrictions, people:

- a. must stay at home, except for specific purposes, including:
  - i. education
  - ii. work, if you cannot work from home
  - iii. exercise and recreation outdoors, with your household, support bubble, or on your own with 1 person from another household (pre-school aged children or those requiring round-the-clock care are not counted towards the total number of people)
  - iv. for medical reasons, appointments and to escape injury or harm
  - v. to shop for food and essentials
  - vi. to provide care for vulnerable people, or as a volunteer
- b. cannot meet people who are not part of your household/support bubble, except for specific purposes
- c. cannot use or operate certain businesses and venues, which will close

11. It is anticipated these restriction will remain until 2 December.

## **Recovery Updates**

### **Economic**

12. City of York Council is urging eligible businesses to register for government grants. Business owners can apply for the grants online at [www.york.gov.uk/COVID19BusinessGrants](http://www.york.gov.uk/COVID19BusinessGrants).

13. The latest Government grants cover both the brief period York was in Tier 2 restrictions and the current national lockdown. Council officers have been quickly working to set up the process after the government issued detailed guidance on delivering the three new grant schemes.

14. The government-prescribed grant allocations, cover:

- a. The period of national lockdown;
- b. The brief period whilst York was in Tier 2 of local restrictions;
- c. The new grant for sectors which have received no previous government support

15. Businesses will soon be able to apply for the following grants:

### *Lockdown Local Restriction Scheme*

16. Business forced to close by law under national lockdown from 5 November will receive:
- a. For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants to be £1,334 per month, or £667 per two weeks;
  - b. For properties with a rateable value of between £15k-£51k grants to be £2,000 per month, or £1,000 per two weeks;
  - c. For properties with a rateable value of £51k or over grants to be £3,000 per month, or £1,500 per two weeks.

### *Tier 2 Local Restriction Scheme*

17. Businesses in the hospitality and leisure sectors, B&Bs and hotels will receive a proportion of the following monthly grants to reflect the 19 days spent in Tier 2:
- a. For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants of £934 per month
  - b. For properties with a rateable value above £15k and below £51k, grants of £1,400 per month
  - c. For properties with a rateable value of £51k or above, grants of £2,100 per month

### *Sector support*

18. A new government grant aimed at businesses which have not previously received support, including nightclubs, dance halls, and discotheques was introduced from 1 November 2020. However, this will be superseded from 5 November by the lockdown restriction scheme.
- a. For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants of £667 per 14-day period
  - b. For properties with a rateable value above £15k and below £51k, grants of £1,000 per 14-day period
  - c. For properties with a rateable value of £51k or above, grants of £1,500 per 14-day period

### *Additional Restrictions Grant*

19. The council has also been in extensive discussions with representative groups across the city to develop proposals for an additional discretionary fund given to local authorities by the government.

20. A decision was taken by the Executive Member for Finance and Performance on 12 November, outlining how the fund would be used to support businesses which are forced to shut in the current lockdown, but miss out on the government funding, including:
- a. Providing equivalent grants to the supply chains of business forced to close
  - b. Offering direct grants of up to £1334 per month for businesses which have to close but don't pay rates
  - c. A voucher scheme to be spent on effective local business support
  - d. A small fund to support future events or works to bring customers to businesses
21. More details on the application process for these grants will be available soon.

## **Communities**

22. In recent weeks the council has launched its local contact tracing programme to reach those the national system has been unable to. Since then, the number of people being contacted to check they are ok and identify any contacts has increased substantially. In the past two weeks, the council has reached well over 80% of contacts passed to them by the national test and trace service and the team are thankful for the support of residents who are contacted for this vital service.
23. Directors of Public Health have been asked to submit expressions of interest to Government to test 10% of our local population on a weekly rolling basis, which will mean testing approximately 20,000 residents every week in York.
24. This is something new that has never been done before and so the council is planning how this new testing programme can be delivered effectively and in a safe way. Anyone testing positive will need to be referred into the local contact tracing service and, therefore, this service must be expanded in order to accept more referrals.
25. An 'expression of interest' will be presented to the Outbreak Management Advisory Board for consideration, after which the proposal will be submitted to the Department for Health and Social Care.
26. Over the October half term, City of York Council approved funding to provide more than 2850 children with food vouchers. Almost £43,000 of emergency funding was identified to continue supporting children with free

school meals, for children who normally receive free school meals during term-time. This is on top of the £9000 previously spent on free school meals from the emergency fund set up to support individuals and families during the pandemic.

27. The council is currently developing plans to use the Winter Grant Scheme Fund recently announced by Government.
28. At the beginning of November, the council put front line teams on standby to support residents and businesses as river levels rose. Working with the Environment Agency, the council used the latest advice to identify peak levels and will communicate any potential impacts separately. Letters were sent to residents living in homes and properties which might be directly affected by high river levels, providing advice and support in addition to any direct mitigation measures put in place.
29. Whilst responding to issues such as potential flooding in addition to Covid-19 is inevitably challenging, working closely with the York and North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum allows the council and partners to work within tried and tested procedures to ensure an appropriate response.

## **Corporate**

30. The latest restrictions have impacts on council services. The council confirmed on Wednesday 4 November which services will remain open, operate slightly differently, or close in order to support local businesses and key workers for the duration of lockdown:
  - a. early years settings, schools, colleges and universities will remain open
  - b. children's and adults services will continue with further guidance expected
  - c. public toilets, parks and children's play areas will remain open
  - d. household waste and recycling sites will remain open
  - e. public meetings will continue remotely with residents encouraged to take part
  - f. footstreets restrictions will revert to finishing at 5.00pm rather than 8.00pm
  - g. temporary loading bans will be removed to ensure additional help for local businesses moving to delivery services

- h. staff working at York District Hospital are able to park for free at Union Terrace coach park until national restrictions end
- i. York, Tang Hall and Acomb Explore Libraries will remain open for use of public computers and to collect items ordered online - all other libraries will close
- j. wedding services will not take place
- k. outdoor and indoor gyms, sport facilities and swimming pools will close
- l. York Mansion House will close
- m. Bereavement Services at York Crematorium will continue.

31. A full list of services impacts of these restrictions can be found at <https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/6174/service-areas-affected-by-covid-19-national-restrictions>

32. York's bus operators have confirmed that the vast majority of bus services in York are continuing to be available during the lockdown for essential travel only. Unless residents or commuters are travelling for work, education or for other legally permitted reasons, Government advice is that people must currently stay at home unless travelling for these reasons.

## Council Plan

33. 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

34. 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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Chief Operating Officer

Report

Approved

Date

17/11/20

**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>

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/ielssueDetails.aspx?IId=60724&PlanId=0&Opt=3#A156530>