

## **CABINET**

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| <b>DATE</b>                | 10 June 2020   |
| <b>REPORT OF</b>           | Chief Executive  |
| <b>SUBJECT</b>             | COVID-19 Recovery  |
| <b>STATUS</b>              | Open   |
| <b>FORWARD PLAN REF NO</b> | Not included on the Forward Plan – to be considered under the General Exception rules of the Constitution. |

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A report setting out the arrangements that have been established to support the Council's and the Borough's recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Cabinet :

1. Notes and supports the recovery arrangements set out in this report.
2. Refers this report to the Communities Scrutiny Panel for consideration and any further recommendations.
3. Receives a bi-monthly report regarding progress of recovery.

#### **1 BACKGROUND AND ISSUES**

- 1.1 This report sets out the arrangements that have been established to support the Council's and the Borough's recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 It is important to stress that we have not fully moved out of the Response phase, in terms of the declared emergency, but it is important to ensure that attention is being given to supporting residents, businesses and communities to look ahead and prepare for what will be a range of different ways of working, engaging and going about their daily lives – building economic resilience, community capacity and wider financial sustainability.
- 1.3 At the sub-regional level, under the auspices of the Humber Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a Humber Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG) has been established. The terms of reference of the RCG are set out in Appendix 1 to this report. The RCG will deal with pan-Humber issues and link into the wider national Recovery developments as necessary.
- 1.4 At the local level, a Recovery Task Group (RTG) has been formed. Chaired by the Council's Deputy Chief Executive, the RTG will focus on the following themes / workstreams:
  - Local economy and business support (including a "green" recovery)
  - Adult social care and protection of the vulnerable

- Children, families and schools
- Environment and regulatory
- Community resilience and engagement
- Financial resilience, reform and renewal (including organisational development)
- Public health and health protection
- CCG - local health and care system

- 1.5 Each theme / workstream is being led by a senior officer (Director or Assistant Director level), with wider membership of each workstream to be drawn from both the Council and the CCG, ensuring a unified approach to relevant matters as necessary and especially in the case of health, care, wellbeing and organisational development. The added value of bringing Council and CCG colleagues together should not be overlooked.
- 1.6 The fundamental purpose of the RTG will be to ensure that the workstreams are linked; and that key recommendations are brought forward either to portfolio holders or Cabinet as necessary. This will inevitably involve attention being given to both service specific and wider strategic / system issues. At the strategic, wider system and place level, Cabinet, the CCG Risk Committee / Governing Body and the Place Board will have significant roles to discharge as the recovery progresses and national policy and guidance evolves. The governance arrangements are set out, in diagrammatical form, in Appendix 2.
- 1.7 It is proposed that the emergency decision making arrangements, implemented as part of our Response, remain in place but are only invoked as is strictly necessary, upon the advice of the Monitoring Officer. These arrangements will be kept under regular review, especially in anticipation of a fuller Council meetings timetable being implemented over the coming weeks and the prospective return of more routine constitutional decision making arrangements.
- 1.8 As Government lockdown measures continue to be reviewed, the local challenge remains to strike the right balance between a focus on supporting economic recovery and managing public health risk. The latter has not diminished, the virus has not been defeated. Local partnership, collaboration and engagement across our key sectors (public, voluntary, schools, business) and with the local community will continue to be essential as the Borough strives to move forward in what remain very challenging circumstances. It therefore remains imperative that all and any key recommendations that emanate to decision makers through the Recovery arrangements reflect clear consideration of and attention to public health advice and guidance.
- 1.9 Following the recent national announcement, arrangements being put in place to support testing and contact tracing will require cross sector engagement as the Council brings forward an outbreak management plan by the end of June, in accordance with Government requirements.
- 1.10 Shielding the most vulnerable has worked effectively in North East Lincolnshire, with the Shielding Hub supporting the distribution of food and

key supplies to residents across the Borough. The role that the voluntary and community sector (VCSE) has played in supporting the response cannot be overstated. Learning from this experience and how the council continues to work with and support the development of our local VCSE infrastructure will be integral to the Borough's progress both during and beyond Recovery. The Vulnerability Hub implemented to enable remote support to be given to up to 4,000 households in the Borough, supporting children and families, is another model from which rich learning can be taken to shape a future approach to early help and engagement, as Recovery progresses.

- 1.11 Digital capacity and infrastructure has played its part in supporting the response. The fact that the Council was able to mobilise large scale homeworking at short notice continues to be a significant contributor to supporting cross council service delivery, external engagement and connectivity throughout the lockdown period. There are important and positive lessons to be applied to future operating arrangements, in order to maximise productivity and support workforce wellbeing. This will feature as part of Recovery planning.
- 1.12 The workforce has performed with distinction to support the response to the pandemic in the Borough. Their wellbeing (safety, including use of/access to PPE), capacity and sustainability of effort over what will be another challenging period is a key element of the organisational development focus, under the auspices of Recovery. In a similar vein councillor engagement, support and wellbeing will also feature as we all come to terms with very different ways of working and operating.
- 1.13 Financial recovery will necessitate the development of a range of options and actions, specifically designed to understand the full extent of the short, medium and long term impact of CV19 on our financial resilience and sustainability. These include specific activity in relation to Collection Fund, Business Rates and the Council's strategies for Finance and Capital. Over time, the approach will include a range of recommendations to Cabinet and aimed at either responding to or mitigating the financial impact of the pandemic. Overall, our response to financial recovery is underpinned by our approach to recovery across all elements of the organisation and the wider Place based recovery, focused on developing an approach that is unified and joined up.

## **2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The risks and consequences associated with the impact of Covid19 are alluded to in the substance of this report.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Government has recognised the efforts that councils are making and responded to concerns regarding the financial strain being put on the sector by providing additional funding and providing a commitment that they will receive the resources they need to deal with the direct impacts of the

pandemic. The Council has received initial grant of £9.6M which will be used predominantly on establishing support mechanisms in response to the emergency. Costs are extensive and cover a number of areas of service delivery, as well as set up costs of specific responses such as shielding hubs and mortuary provision. However, this grant only equates to approximately 7% of net spend and the in-year financial impact is estimated to be well in excess of the grant when taking into account lost income and delayed savings opportunities. As Cabinet is aware, the Local Government Association continues to lobby for further financial support for the sector.

- 3.2 The Council is anticipating that the financial impact of the pandemic will lead to a significant slow-down in the local economy which will therefore impact upon our funding base. Like any other business concern, the Council needs to balance its budget over a period of time and it is important to note that local taxation makes up around 80% of our overall funding.
- 3.3 At the present time, the full financial impacts of the pandemic are still to be fully established. Regular financial monitoring arrangements remain in place and budget holders are being asked to identify financial impacts split between increased costs, reduced income and delayed savings opportunities. The focus of monitoring is predominantly in relation to the current year at the present time.
- 3.4 The council is being required to complete regular financial monitoring information to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The monitoring incorporates the allocation of funding, additional spending pressures, income losses, council tax collection information and the availability of reserves.
- 3.5 Once the in-year position becomes clearer it will be necessary to start to assess the impact over the medium term in advance of the 2021/22 budget round.

#### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications that immediately arise from the recommendations sought.
- 4.2 Emergency decision making, underpinning the Council's response to the COVID-19 emergency, has been based upon sound constitutional provisions and statute with appropriate levels of consultation and engagement across the public and private sectors. These arrangements will continue to be kept under regular review as per paragraph 1.7 of this report and in consultation with the Leader and the Chief Executive.

#### **5. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

The health, safety and wellbeing of our workforce has been at the forefront of the response to COVID19 by the Local Authority and will continue to be so.

**6. CONTACT OFFICER**

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**Rob Walsh**  
**Chief Executive**



## Humber Recovery Coordinating Group Terms of Reference

### Aim/Role:

Recovering to a new normality during the COVID-19 outbreak is best achieved at the local level and through existing systems and partnerships. Place based recovery groups have been established within each local authority area and through partnerships such as the Humber, Coast and Vale STP, and they are responsible and accountable for recovery in those areas / systems.

The aim of the Humber Recovery Coordinating Group is to provide a Humber wide coordination and assurance role, where required, to make sure people, communities, public services and businesses across the area are supported and empowered to return to a new normality, whilst continuing to mitigate the risks of COVID-19.

### Reporting to:

Accountability remains with the place / systems based recovery groups, where existing governance structures will apply, but situation reporting will be provided from the Recovery Coordinating Group to:

- The Strategic Coordinating Group during the Response Phase, through the Chair of the Local Resilience Forum
- A MHCLG RecCG, or Ministerial Recovery Group, if established during the Recovery Phase

### Reporting frequency:

Weekly to Strategic Coordinating Group / to be confirmed to MHCLG

### Meeting Frequency:

Weekly – Wednesday at 0930.

### TOR (Group Objectives / Deliverables):

To provide a Humber wide coordination and assurance role to make sure the following objectives / deliverables are being achieved across the Humber area:

- A strategic overview of the impact of Covid-19 on health and social care, people and communities, economy and employment, essential services and infrastructure
- A strategic overview of the work and issues arising from the four Humber local authority recovery groups, health and social care recovery groups and LEP recovery groups
- A co-ordinated strategic approach to Covid-19 recovery within the Humber Area

- A co-ordinated strategic approach to achieving recovery focussed national strategies, such as phased withdrawal of lockdown and ongoing Shielding.
- Humber wide commissioned recovery services / activities / coordination groups where the demand is not met at the local level or through existing systems
- Facilitation of mutual aid support between Category 1 and 2 responders at a Humber level, where required, to restore essential services, infrastructure and transport networks.
- Regular reporting to the national recovery structure

The coordination of COVID-19 response activities, and planning for any future surges / risks, will be managed by the Strategic Coordinating Group / Local Resilience Forum.

## **Membership and Coordination:**

### Core Membership

- Humber Local Authority Chief Executives
- Chair, Humber Local Resilience Forum
- Chief Accountable Officer, NEL CCG
- Chief Accountable Officer, HCC CCG

### Invited as Required

- Humber LEP Chief Executive
- NHS England
- Local Authority Directors of Public Health (embedded in HCVP and local recovery groups)
- MHCLG Government Liaison Officer
- Other Category 1 and 2 responders

### Coordination and Secretariat

All core members of the group have an equal stake in the assurance and coordination role and therefore a single chair has not been appointed. At each meeting a facilitator will be identified to take the group through the agenda. A member will be nominated to represent the interests of the group on regional and national recovery meetings on a case by case basis.

The Group will be provided with appropriate project officer(s) and secretariat support from Humber Emergency Planning Service. HEPS will provide the exception reporting on the activities of existing LRF Covid-19 Groups.

## **Structure of the Recovery Group:**

The outline structure of the recovery groups are shown at Appendix I. It is important to note that this is not a traditional “command and control” structure. The responsibility for place and systems recovery remains within the individual groups.

If the Humber Recovery Coordination Group identifies any gaps in the delivery of the aims and objectives of the group it may establish multi agency sub-groups to address. Each group will produce its own Terms of Reference.

## **Transition from Response to Recovery:**

An emergency was called in response to the threat of Covid-19 as there was a risk to life that could not be managed through existing business as usual structures and arrangements. Multi agency coordination structures were formed through a Strategic (SCG) and Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG), and a number of cells, to manage the response phase of the emergency.

The recovery phase of an emergency is the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency. It is good practise to start the recovery process as soon as possible into an emergency and often means that recovery runs in parallel to the response for a short period of time.

Due to the protracted nature of the response phase to COVID-19, and the risk of future peaks, the SCG coordination and contingency planning role is likely to continue and so it will work parallel with the recovery structure for longer than normal.

The level of activity within the SCG structure will reduce as the need for multi-agency coordination is replaced by business as usual or recovery processes. The SCG will manage the stand down of TCG Cells when they are no longer required, or when they become business as usual activities reporting by exception to the RCG. The TCG will stand down when there is no further need for multi-agency coordination at the tactical level.

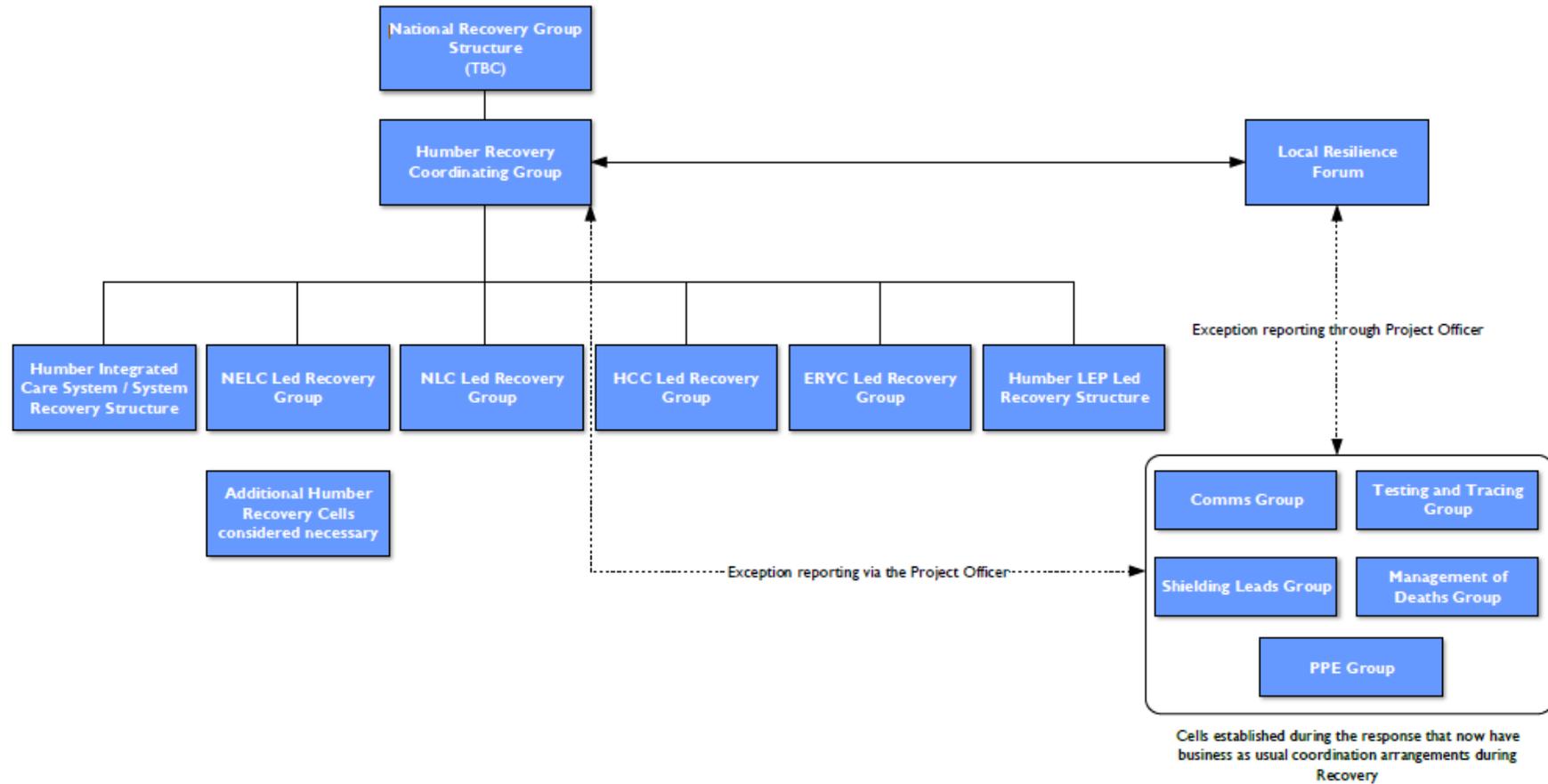
The SCG will continue to manage the response and will re-escalate the structure if required. The SCG may look towards the Local Resilience Forum structure to address some of the future contingency planning required.

There will reach a point where the response arrangements are no longer required and the SCG closes down leaving the RCG to manage recovery. The criteria set out in the LRF Emergency Procedures Manual for this transition is when:

1. there is no known further immediate risk to life
2. there are no known serious public order or crime prevention issues which impact on the co-ordination of the recovery phase.
3. all responding organisations are operating response activities at a level that does not necessitate a Strategic Coordinating Group or Tactical Coordinating Group to coordinate and facilitate their activity.
4. there are no known scenarios which are likely to give rise for the requirement to reinstate the Strategic or Tactical Coordinating Group in the foreseeable future in relation to the incident.

The transition between response and recovery will be agreed jointly between the SCG and the RCG.

## Outline Recovery Communications Structure



# Governance

