



## NOTICE OF MEETING

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>'Virtual' Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date and Time:</b>	<b>Tuesday, 16 June 2020 at 7.00 pm</b>
<b>Place:</b>	<b>Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet</b>
<b>Telephone Enquiries to:</b>	<b>01252 774141</b> <a href="mailto:committeeservices@hart.gov.uk">committeeservices@hart.gov.uk</a>
<b>Members:</b>	<b>Axam, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Lamb, Makepeace-Browne, Smith, Wildsmith, Wright, Worlock (Chairman)</b>

Joint Chief Executive

CIVIC OFFICES, HARLINGTON WAY  
FLEET, HAMPSHIRE GU51 4AE

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## AGENDA

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### **1. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

The Chairman to seek Council agreement to suspend Standing Orders, 9.3 (Show of Hands for Voting), 22.1 (Standing to Speak) and 22.2 (Chairman Standing).

### **2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

To elect a Vice-Chairman.

### **3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 18 February 2020 are attached to be confirmed and signed as a correct record. **Paper A**

### **4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence from Members\*.

\***Note:** Members are asked to email [Committee Services](#) in advance of the meeting as soon as they become aware they will be absent.

### **5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To declare disclosable, pecuniary and any other interests.

### **6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

Anyone wishing to make a statement to the Committee should contact the Committee Services Officer by phone or email (see front page of this Agenda) at least two clear working days prior to the meeting. Further information can be found at [https://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4\\_The\\_Council/Council\\_meetings/Public%20Participation%20leaflet%202020%20A4.pdf](https://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/4_The_Council/Council_meetings/Public%20Participation%20leaflet%202020%20A4.pdf)

### **7. COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND NEXT STEPS**

To receive a report from the Joint Chief Executive which provides an overview of the Council's work to support the district during the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and also provides the council's emerging recovery plan to support the district in the coming months as peak infection passes. The report includes a list of Executive decision and includes a high-level assessment of the emerging financial impacts on the council budget.

#### **Paper B**

Appendix 1 - Hart District Council COVID-19 Recovery Plan

Appendix 2 - Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the Hart Finances

*(This report is confidential)*

### **8. MEMBER WORKSHOP**

To discuss a potential O&S Work Programme for the coming year 2020/2021\*

\*The Leader of the Council, Councillor David Neighbour and Deputy Leader, Councillor James Radley to be invited to join the meeting to help seek an informal Cabinet view/consideration of the 'way forward'/strategic direction of the Council, with particular focus on financial robustness, service plans & their delivery, in light of the COVID-19 implications.

**Date of Despatch: 9 June 2020**

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, 18 February 2020 at 7pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

### **COUNCILLORS**

Axam, Crookes (Chairman), Davies, Dorn, Farmer, Harward (substitute Drage), Lamb, Makepeace-Browne (from 8.11 pm), Smith, Wildsmith, Worlock

**In Attendance:** Forster, Neighbour, Radley, Southern

#### **Officers:**

Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
John Elson	Head of Environment and Technical Services
Gill Chapman	Committee Services
Dana Kavanagh	Capita (for item 115)
Ken Trotter	Capita (for item 115)

### **108 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of 21 January 2019 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **109 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Drage, substituted by Councillor Harward.

### **110 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman announced that the confidential agenda item (Minute 123 below) would be taken first, and the meeting moved to exclude the public at this point.

### **111 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None declared.

### **112 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

None.

### **113 SERVICE PERFORMANCE - HEADS OF SERVICE ATTENDANCE**

The Head of Environment and Technical Services, John Elson, attended to discuss service performance.

Questions were asked around the Service Plan, KPIs and budgeting. Issues considered included the green corridor, joint waste team review, textiles recycling, consultation with parishes, parking charges and the traffic management plan. After requests, Mr Elson agreed to circulate details of parking income, and figures on cardboard recycling when available.

#### **114 CRIME AND DISORDER JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2019 were noted.

*Councillor Makepeace-Browne entered the meeting during this item.*

#### **115 2019-20 BUDGET MONITORING – TO END OF DECEMBER**

The Committee were advised of the position on revenue and capital expenditure at the end of December 2019. Cabinet would consider this report at its meeting on 5 March 2020. It was noted that £631k is forecast to be returned.

Members discussed:

- The nature, background and interrelationship between the £631k return to reserves and its relationship to the original new settlement budget
- Income from (mainly major) planning applications down in light of oncoming local plan, also relates to building control income
- Savings across a number of services
- Challenges next year
- Fleet pond capital project now included in a bigger project
- Planning appeals - substantial costs that cannot be planned for

#### **DECISION**

- 1 The revised projections and reasons for the main revenue variations, highlighted in Paragraph 4 and analysed in Appendix 1, be noted.
- 2 The current spending position for Capital shown, in Paragraph 5 and Appendix 2 which includes project details, be noted.

#### **116 LOCAL DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF SCHEME 2019/20**

The Committee looked to determine the Local Discretionary Relief Scheme for 2019/20.

Members considered the issues around this scheme. It was confirmed that next year would be the final year, and that businesses are notified and it is then up to them to claim.

#### **DECISION – Recommendation to Cabinet**

That Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet that the Local Discretionary Relief Scheme for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 3, be approved.

## **117 COMMUNITY GARDEN AT EDENBROOK COUNTRY PARK**

Members considered the delivery of a Community Garden initiative at Edenbrook Country Park prior to the proposal being considered at Cabinet.

Members considered:

- The Community Garden ethos
- A different approach and facility not available elsewhere in the district
- The sections - allotments area allocated, garden, storage
- Publicity and Consultation with residents and potential allotment holders
- Running/maintenance costs
- HVA management
- Opportunities for anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping etc

The Committee agreed that, whilst supporting the proposals, more clarity on the community garden was needed, particularly with regard to the merits of the Community Garden approach as an alternative to allotments. Members suggested that Cabinet consider the potential for anti-social behaviour and that Cabinet request HVA and the Countryside Manager to attend the next Cabinet meeting to clarify the points around the approach of the Community Garden, and the management of the project generally.

### **DECISION**

That the proposed Community Garden initiative at Edenbrook Country Park be supported, with the opportunity for further clarification at Cabinet.

*Councillor Harward left the meeting and returned during this item.*

## **118 RIPA POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Committee received the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office Inspection Report into the Council's use of powers under Part II of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, and considered the draft revised RIPA Policy and Procedures.

Members considered the report and and the RIPA Policy and procedures.

### **DECISION**

- 1 The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office Inspection Report be noted.
- 2 The revised RIPA Policy and Procedures be approved.

## **119 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION - 2019/20**

The Committee were updated on the Council's performance indicator results for the third quarter of 2019/20 (1 October 2019 – 31 December 2019).

Members asked for clarification on:

- RB06 – check the target council tax collected
- H17 - Only 1 incident - accuracy of data to be checked
- R13 - Fly tipping - number of complaints referred to pursuing the potentially identified wrongdoers. Members asked for the recorded number of incidents of fly tipping (via street care)

## **DECISION**

That the information be noted.

*Councillor Lamb left and reentered the meeting during this item.*

*Councillor Axam left the meeting during this item.*

## **120 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

The Cabinet Work Programme was considered.

## **121 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was considered:

Commercialisation project review would inform the meeting how the process is working, and would subsequently receive reports on projects that are closed  
Corporate Peer Review – new dates could be pushed back  
Head of Place would report on Economic Development when he attended Committee in April for a service update

## **122 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

The following item contained exempt information.

Members decided that the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **DECISION**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to, on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

## **I23 FIVE COUNCILS CORPORATE SERVICES CONTRACTS**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the current position with regard to the contract for corporate services entered into with the Five Councils' Partnership. This report had been considered by Cabinet at its February meeting.

Members endorsed the February Cabinet's decision.

Members agreed to move back into open session.

*This report was Confidential.*

The meeting closed at 9.33 pm

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

**DATE OF MEETING:** 16 JUNE 2020

**TITLE OF REPORT:** COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND NEXT STEPS

**Report of:** Joint Chief Executive

**Cabinet Member:** Leader of the Council

### I PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the Council's work to support the district during the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and also provides the Council's emerging recovery plan to support the district in the coming months.
- 1.2 This report only represents an initial, high level assessment of the current position. It is a 'holding' report. The situation is still live, the pandemic is still ongoing (albeit apparently decreasing in intensity), and more work is required to give a more informed assessment of the implications for the Council. Furthermore, informed reports particularly on the financial implications and the Recovery Plan will be prepared for consideration in due course.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the outline Hart COVID-19 Recovery Plan shown in Appendix 2 is noted, recognising that it will need to be updated as required in the light of emerging information and local circumstances.

### 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The global pandemic of coronavirus has resulted in an unprecedented challenge to both the Council and the community that it serves. All public services have been placed under considerable stress, not least of which was to seek at no notice to continue to operate in a 'lockdown' scenario with staff displaced and working from home. The Council however, responded by maintaining essential Council services, providing support to local businesses, supporting the most vulnerable in our communities and delivering national funding packages.
- 3.2 The Council is a Category One responder under the Civil Contingencies Act and is therefore required to initiate and take action as necessary to respond to any emergency. The Council is also part of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) which brings together partners and national advisors if required to support response and recovery. There are two distinct but overlapping phases in emergency management.
  - **Response Phase** – Encompasses the actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of the pandemic. At this point rapid implementation of arrangements for collaboration, coordination and communication are vital. Response encompasses the effort to deal with the direct effects of the emergency itself and the indirect effects.

- **Recovery Phase** – The recovery phase begins at the earliest opportunity following the onset of an emergency, running in tandem with the response to the emergency itself. It continues until the disruption has been rectified, demands on services have returned to normal levels and the needs of those directly and indirectly affected have been met. In sharp contrast to the response phase, the recovery phase may endure for months, years or even decades.
- 3.3 The Joint Chief Executive’s preparations for COVID-19 began through internal management teams throughout January and February, including the testing of homeworking for all staff during February and early March. This early consideration of issues enabled significant preparation to be made to maintain Council services even when working remotely from the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020.
- 3.4 On Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Local Resilience Forum formally declared coronavirus a major incident. On the following Sunday, after the announcement by the Prime Minister of the need to stay home, as well as make provision for the care and support of the shielded or vulnerable by Councils, Hart District Council invoked its Emergency Plan, advising Group Leaders of this decision, via email. This was then communicated to staff and the public on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March, with the Council Offices closing its doors to the public.

## **4 GOVERNANCE**

- 4.1 Under the constitution, decision making in the event of a Civil Emergency is altered as outlined below:
- *“Duty to act and power to incur expenditure, so as to provide support to the emergency services in dealing with a civil emergency as defined by the Hampshire County Council (or other appropriate body) and the District’s Major Civil Emergency Plan or successor Plan and/or arrangements. Such power may be exercised by the Officer in charge of the Council response or other formal arrangements entered into between the Council and Hampshire County Council pursuant to the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 or otherwise in accordance with the Emergency Plan.*
  - *“CSOs [contract standing orders] cannot be waived where the contract value is in excess of the relevant EU threshold, unless it can be demonstrated to be essential for reasons of responding to a civil emergency, business continuity incident or in recovery.”*
- 4.2 Whilst recognising the ability for the Joint Chief Executives to take emergency decisions, mechanisms were put in place to help ensure good engagement, communication and governance. These included establishing
- a weekly Group Leaders meeting from the 23<sup>rd</sup> March (moved from monthly)
  - a Group Leaders ‘chat’ via Teams from the 27<sup>th</sup> March
  - a fortnightly Cabinet meeting (moved from monthly)
  - a new way to respond effectively to all Councillor enquiries (2<sup>nd</sup> April)
- 4.3 To help keep Councillors informed, the engagement developed over time. Emails were sent to all Councillors on the 20<sup>th</sup> March (on social distancing), 23<sup>rd</sup> March (on local support hubs) and then on a daily basis, with a wide variety of issues covered from the 2<sup>nd</sup> April until the 4<sup>th</sup> June when by mutual agreement this was reduced to a weekly update. The distribution list was broadened during April to include Parish and Town Councils, County Councillors and MP’s, and more recently now also includes the Voluntary Community Co-ordinators across the district.

## 5 COVID-19 RESPONSE

5.1 The Council has had to fundamentally change the way in which it provides its services. The organisation was in essence split between 'Response' and 'Business as Usual'. Many staff were reallocated to new roles, as new obligations were placed on the Council. All of this occurred during a time when almost all staff were required to work at home, with only a very small number of staff required in the office on a rota basis to support front line response.

5.2 At the beginning of the emergency, the following strategic objectives were established:

### **Connect, Co-ordinate and Communicate**

- Coordinate a holistic response across the Council to coronavirus.
- Support businesses and economy, to help their sustainability during this pandemic
- Respond to the changing expectations of the Government as it evolves through guidance, announcements and regulations
- Ensure the Council had resilient arrangements in place for the continuation of key priority services
- Ensure that arrangements were in place to receive and support those seeking help from the Council
- Ensure clarity of communication.

The response was split broadly into four separate areas,

- supporting those who were shielded or vulnerable,
- business grants and support to our economy,
- hardship, homelessness and management of emergency discharge from hospital and
- emergency response information management.

### 5.3 **Emergency Response Information Management**

- During the emergency, there has been a plethora of information produced within the LRF, as well as through alternative sources such as the Office for National Statistic (ONS).
- The emergency response information management team was pulled together to help everyone to remain informed of key information that could help inform or shape decisions.

### 5.4 **Information, Data and Comms**

An important stage is to ensure residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders have access to key information during the crisis. Actions the Council implemented, included:

- A new section of the Council's website – the COVID-19 Information Hub,
- A leaflet sent to all households in Hart,
- Weekly business email,
- Social media – Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter,
- Daily updates to Members, Town & Parish Councils, and
- Internal weekly staff newsletter.

## 5.5 Supporting those who were shielded or vulnerable

The Council was advised on Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March of a completely new area of work. It was very clear from the outset, that there were advantages of working in collaboration with Hampshire County Council (HCC) who would be the recipient of data on those who were to be shielded, and who had obligations to many people across the county through their adult and child social care services.

Working alongside the HCC, other Districts and locally Hart Voluntary Action, the local response hub went 'live' in a matter of only a few working days later, with the HCC contact centre becoming operational at the beginning of April.

Themes of work have been undertaken around

- access to food, with many generous donations from local supermarkets
- pharmacy and prescription collections
- COVID-19 Grants with Hart District Council providing funds to those community groups who were on the 'front line' of response

## 5.6 Hardship, Homelessness and Emergency Discharge from Hospital

- **Hardship Fund** – announced on the 27<sup>th</sup> March, this enables £150 to be discounted from all eligible persons (i.e. those who are in receipt of Council tax relief).

Discretion was provided to local Councils to decide how best to apply any remaining funds within this hardship fund. Hart District Council took the decision to hold this funding for any person who found themselves without money and in need. The hardship fund has been managed within the Engagement and Support team and around £5k has been spent to support individuals in their daily lives. This has included the purchase of a fridge for an elderly resident, so she didn't have to go to the shops daily and the purchase of a bicycle enabling another resident to get to work without using public transport.

- **Homelessness** – Ministry of Housing, local Government, and Communities (HCLG) required all Councils to bring inside any rough sleepers throughout lockdown. This has included those that face hitting the streets during the pandemic. (there have been a small number in Hart who are not local to the area). So far, the Council has housed 16 households in Bed & breakfast (B&B) since lockdown started. The majority of these have been assisted through into private rented sector accommodation, or other housing. Two remain in B&B and the team are working on exit plans.
- **Emergency Discharge from Hospital** - there has been no mass discharge from local hospitals. However, the Council has worked with Hart Voluntary Action to support their "home from hospital" project, to make sure that those who have been discharged have a safe environment to return to.

## 5.7 Business Grants & Supporting the Economy

- **Business Grants** – The Council was responsible at short notice for distributing the Small Business Grant Fund and Retail/Hospitality Grant Funds to eligible businesses in Hart. The Council has distributed over £12 million in grants to over 900 small businesses. It is now dealing with Small Business Discretionary Grants Fund to support a range of businesses who were not supported by the first round of grants.

- **Supporting the Economy** – this has been undertaken in a variety of ways including:
  - Weekly business e-newsletters, plus website, and social media – Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter,
  - Signposting to other Government support, plus FAQs,
  - Support and advice for pubs, restaurants and other food suppliers to move to takeaway-only options safely,
  - Provision of information online regarding which businesses are open for business – helping businesses, residents and community groups,
  - Ensuring only those businesses who are allowed to be open are open, dealing with those businesses who needed to close, and providing daily updates for Govt,
  - Working with groups like the Job Centre on the implications for our residents, and the number of people claiming benefits.

## **6 EMERGENCY DECISIONS TAKEN**

- 6.1 As outlined in 4.1 above, in the event of a civil emergency, the Joint Chief Executives may make decisions to support the emergency plan response. These have been recorded, since the invocation of the emergency plan, via an online log.
- 6.2 Details of the decisions taken under the emergency provisions within the constitution are:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Decision</b>
22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020	Invocation of the Hart Emergency Plan (O)
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	Establishment of structure to deliver COVID-19 response, allocation of resources across the organisation for this purpose (O).
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	Establishment of a new cost code to allocate all COVID-19 related spend (O)
24 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Retention of Head of Community Services based on a negotiated agreement (with commensurate impact on the Head of Environment and Technical Services) – cost £15K (E)
25 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	To establish a Hart Response Hub will require an IT platform. This could be done inhouse, but would require scarce resources - purchased a system at a cost of £1,000 (O)
27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Once £150 reduction is applied to eligible Council Taxpayers, all remaining funds in the hardship fund to be allocated for use by any resident who finds themselves in financial hardship. Until the £150 can be applied, no requests for Council Tax payment will be made of this group (E)
27 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Additional resources required for communications, additional resources at additional cost brought in (website reformatted for COVID19) (O)
30 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	The creation and distribution of a COVID 19 leaflet for all residents (O)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Decision</b>
30 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Two compartments in Elvetham Heath Nature Reserve closed due problems with visitors congregating at ‘kissing’ gates and also being unable to maintain reasonable social distancing (O)
3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2020	Agreement to match grant funding from HCC to Community/Voluntary Groups responding directly to the COVID pandemic – cost £5000 (E)
9 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Agreed to establishment of Recovery in shadow, whilst response is ongoing (O)
28 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Agreement to use of a survey to assess the impact of COVID on the community (O)
9 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	Commissioned consultants to help with the reallocation of road space for reopening of the high streets, current cost £11,000 (E)
25 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	Elvetham Heath Nature Reserve fully opened to the public (O)
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2020	Jointly commission consultants with Hampshire County Council to prepare a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – cost £20,000 to enable further bids for funding (E)
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	Additional resources required to enable effective Recovery, whilst providing continuity of business as usual services, as well as continued response. Cost £30,000 (E)
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	Commissioned contractors to install and manage traffic management measures in Fleet Road to facilitate social distancing for initial 6 weeks period cost £6k (O)

O = Operational Decisions – no further approval required as within operational terms and budget  
 E = Executive Decision – urgent decisions made in the absence of the Executive.

## **7 BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

7.1 Under the Civil Contingencies Act, there is a requirement for Category 1 providers to aim to continue essential services during a civil emergency and we have sought to do so. Outlined below are the services and how they have been impacted:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Impact (increase or decrease in demand)</b>	<b>Any change in service delivery</b>	<b>Restoration of service delivery if known</b>
Benefits	Increase	No	Not applicable
Bottle Banks	Decrease	Yes, closed for around 6 weeks	Now open
Building Control	Decrease	Service remains fully functional and only completion site visits temporarily stopped during total lock down.	No application (all site visits resumed)

<b>Service</b>	<b>Impact (increase or decrease in demand)</b>	<b>Any change in service delivery</b>	<b>Restoration of service delivery if known</b>
Business Support Unit	Same	No, albeit no staff on site	Not applicable
Car Parks	Decrease	Car park charging ceased in March	Charges may be reintroduced later this summer.
Communications	Increase	Temporary additional resources added	Not applicable
Committee Services	Decrease	Initially all Council Meetings were cancelled.	Normal meetings of the Council and Committees have now been reinstated but are operating under new Government virtual Council meeting rules.
Council Tax	Increase	No	Not applicable
Countryside	Increase	Short term closure of the Elvetham Nature Reserve Enclosure	All SANGS, Country parks and Heaths etc open (including Elvetham Heath Nature Reserve. are now open
Disabled Facilities Grants	Same	Yes. Unable to access inside properties – all non-emergency work ceased	Imminent restoration of service subject to risk assessment for visits to homes
Elections	Decrease	Coronavirus Act prevents elections until next year	Subject to amendments of the legislation, no elections until May 2021
Environmental Protection	Increase	No. Fully functional throughout - larger number of calls/ complaints	Not applicable

<b>Service</b>	<b>Impact (increase or decrease in demand)</b>	<b>Any change in service delivery</b>	<b>Restoration of service delivery if known</b>
Facilities Management	Increase	Need to ensure the building is safe for essential visits / delivering the virtual Council meetings	Not applicable
Food inspections	Decrease	Food inspections suspended until July – phone contact instead	May be reintroduced in July subject to risk assessment
Litter Enforcement	Decrease	Enforcement ceased 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	Enforcement to recommence at the beginning of July
Leisure Centres	Loss	Closed since March 2020 as a result of Government ‘lockdown’	Unknown
Garden Waste	Same	Garden Waste services suspended to protect residual waste collections	Service restored from the 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2020
Homelessness	Increase	Government expectations increased	Not applicable
On street parking enforcement	Decrease	Carried out under a management agreement with Hampshire County Council who requested a reduction	On site visits now being carried out but enforcement not yet restored
Planning (Development Management)	Similar	Planning applications still administered. However, suspended site visits, suspended site notices, alternative arrangements for Planning Committee	Some site visits reintroduced June subject to risk assessment. The Government has introduced new statutory planning application publicity arrangements.
Planning Enforcement	Increase	Site visits suspended unless cases of emergency	Not applicable

Service	Impact (increase or decrease in demand)	Any change in service delivery	Restoration of service delivery if known
Planning Policy & Economic Development	Increase	Local Plan adopted April Increase workload for Business Employment Skills Team	Not applicable

7.2 In the meantime, with the exception of the Reception area, the Council remains essentially closed to the public other than for access to essential welfare services such as homelessness and benefits. All payments can be made online and staff can still operate remotely and are accessible. The building itself is being adapted for safe occupation but it is not the immediate intention to bring staff back into the Offices until later this summer and even then, numbers will be carefully controlled to ensure safe working practices including social distancing. All tenants who occupied the premises are being kept informed.

## 8 URGENT BUSINESS CONTINUITY DECISIONS TAKEN

8.1 Naturally, with the requirement for social distancing, the ability to continue with normal democratic decision making has taken a sidestep.

8.2 The constitution makes provision for urgent decisions

Date	Decision
13 <sup>th</sup> March	Contract signed to install Virtual Private Network (VPN) to enable Council systems to be access from home
17 <sup>th</sup> March	Purchase of new laptops and mobile phones to enable home working.
18 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Cessation of car parking charges and on-street parking charge enforcement
18 <sup>th</sup> March	Commission the purchase of Modern.gov Committee services software
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	Garden Waste and Bulky Waste Collection Services suspended
22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2020	Decision to commission White Young Green (and separate legal advice) to investigate waste client team implications arising from BDBC concerns. Cost £15,000
22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2020	Decision to go 'live' with Discretionary Grants Scheme on 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2020.

## 9 MOVING INTO RECOVERY

9.1 As part of established emergency planning protocols, the LRF has established a recovery group to oversee this complex and long running process. Recovery is defined as “the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency”, but it is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected. It is a complex social and developmental process rather than just a remedial process. The broad, interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from include humanitarian (including health); economic; environment and infrastructure.

- 9.2 Although the LRF recovery plan will provide a framework, it is important that a local recovery plan is established. The way recovery processes are undertaken is critical to their success. Recovery is best achieved when the plan is created with the affected community and this is somewhat easier to achieve in response to a physical emergency such as flooding as there are physical assets to repair. Recovery from a global pandemic has international, national and local impacts and as such the plan will change over time with the pace of recovery being particularly linked to national announcements. On 11th May, the Government published its recovery plan which also would have to respond to any second wave of infection, when recovery may pause and the response phase resume.
- 9.3 Therefore, the local recovery plan must be evidence based but intuitive and responsive to changing situations. The pandemic and the ongoing effects have potential to fundamentally change how people live and work; activities or projects the Council or communities intended to undertake may now not be viable or no longer relevant.
- 9.4 The scope of the proposed Hart Recovery Plan requires further development, but an initial draft plan is included as **Appendix I**
- 9.5 As engaging with the community is vital to this approach, one of our first steps has been to establish a 'sounding board' with key representation from the NHS, Business, the Voluntary Sector, Citizens Advice, Parish and Town Councils and Volunteers who have been on the forefront of the COVID response.
- 9.6 Recovery activity is currently being carried out 'in shadow' whilst the Council remains in the response phase (albeit it is running parallel to that work). In addition, with the gradual lifting of lockdown, public and political expectations regarding a return to 'business as usual' service delivery means that resource availability for response, recovery and returning to normal services is having a major impact on the Councils ability to deliver against this 'perfect storm' of expectation.
- 9.7 As part of the recovery process, the Council is leading on a number of interlinked projects to support the High Streets, provide a safe environment for people to use the High Streets, and support the local economy. This involved close collaboration with HCC, the M3 Local Enterprise Board (LEP), the Town/Parish Councils, and Fleet BID. On 5th June, two bids for funding were submitted, one to the LEP and the other via HCC to Department for Transport (DfT). This would support a 3-stage project in Fleet Road to pedestrianise it for a temporary period during the current crisis. The Council is also working with Town and Parish Councils in the other key retail areas.
- 9.8 Linked with this High Streets project, the Council is also looking at funding opportunities to promote walking and cycling across the District and Safe Routes to Schools/School Streets. The Government has advised to avoid public transport if possible (and leave them available for key workers) and at the same time promote active lifestyles through walking and cycling. In order to progress bids for funding for these projects, the Council will need to jointly commission with Hampshire County Council a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Hart District Council will need to fund 50% of the cost of this, probably around £20,000.

## 10 FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 10.1 An initial very high-level assessment of the financial impact of COVID-19 is outlined in the confidential **Appendix 2** (*confidential due to reference to commercial arrangements with partners*). This is simply a holding statement until a more refined paper can be prepared for August.

## 11 LEGAL AND EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1 The Council is a Category One responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and is therefore required to initiate and take action as necessary to respond to any emergency. The Council is also part of the LRF which brings together partners and national advisors if required to support response and recovery in relation to major emergencies which require cross agency cooperation.
- 11.2 In addition, the Council has wide ranging authority under the 'general competence' provision of the Localism Act 2011 which enables it to take actions to the benefit of its area which are commonly available to other private sector bodies.
- 11.3 During the pandemic outbreak (which it must be stressed has not yet passed), new primary and secondary legislation was passed by Central Government in order to amend established ways living and working that required social distancing, home working, school closures, protection of key workers and the vulnerable. This framework enabled Councils to assist to combat the economic and health effects of the outbreak, through additional public protection enforcement and social care responsibilities.
- 11.4 For the purposes of equalities, one of the main principles adopted during the outbreak was to provide services for as long as possible at usual service levels. However, restrictions on social distancing did mean that some services, had to be reduced or rescheduled.
- 11.5 However, other services continued with amended ways of working, for example the Housing and Planning services continued.
- 11.6 Other services to support our most vulnerable and isolated residents were increased. As part of the Local Response Centre, colleagues supported shielded residents with shopping and/or collection of prescriptions.

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Appendix 1 - Hart District Council COVID-19 Recovery Plan  
Appendix 2 – Financial Impact of COVID-19 on the Hart Finances  
(*This report is confidential*)

**DRAFT**

## Hart District Council COVID-19 Recovery Plan

### Introduction

Recovery is a complex and long running process that will involve many agencies and participants. It can be long lasting and may be more costly in terms of resources; it is therefore essential for the process to be based on well thought out and tested structures and procedures for it to work in an efficient and orderly manner.

*Recovery is defined as the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency, but it is more than simply the replacement of what has been destroyed and the rehabilitation of those affected.*

It is a complex social and developmental process rather than just a remedial process. The broad, interlinked categories of impact that individuals and communities will need to recover from include:

- Humanitarian (including. Health);
- Economic;
- Environment and Infrastructure;

The way recovery processes are undertaken is critical to their success. Recovery is best achieved when the affected community can exercise a high degree of self-determination.

### **The aim of the plan is to:**

Provide an integrated management structure for recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **The objectives of the plan are:**

- To meet the statutory requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- To implement and manage an effective multi-agency recovery process.
- To ensure a coordinated and integrated recovery process.
- To identify representation to populate the recovery structure.
- To identify partners in the recovery process.
- To ensure effective partnership working between the relevant organisations and agencies.
- To address the short, medium and long-term requirements of those affected.

## Outline of the Incident Response

**Response Phase** – Encompasses the actions taken to deal with the immediate effects of the pandemic. Rapid implementation of arrangements for collaboration, coordination and communication are vital. Response encompasses the effort to deal with the direct effects of the emergency itself and the indirect effects.

The Gold (Strategic), Silver (Tactical) and Bronze (Operational) tiered command structure used by Category One responders is nationally recognised and accepted. The terms Gold, Silver and Bronze are used to describe *individual* agency levels of command. The terms Strategic, Tactical and Operational are used when describing multi-agency command levels. In this response the Local Resilience Forum with representation from Category 1 responders across Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton have come together under a holistic management structure, led by the Strategic Co-ordinating Group.

**Recovery Phase** – The recovery phase begins at the earliest opportunity following the onset of an emergency, running in tandem with the response to the emergency itself. It continues until the disruption has been rectified, demands on services have returned to normal levels and the needs of those directly and indirectly affected have been met. In sharp contrast to the response phase, the recovery phase may endure for months, years or even decades.

The HLOW LRF Community Recovery Plan provides a recovery framework and guidance. The Hart District Council COVID-19 Recovery Plan is aligned to this framework.

## Understanding Recovery

The purpose of providing recovery support is to assist the affected community towards management of its own recovery. It is recognised that where a community experiences a significant emergency, there is a need to supplement the personal, family and community structures which have been disrupted. Recovery should be done “with” the community not “to” the community.

The Principles of recovering from emergencies are:

- Recovery is an **enabling and supportive process**, which allows individuals, families and communities to attain a proper level of functioning through the provision of information, specialist services and resources.
- Effective recovery requires the establishment of **planning and management** arrangements, which are accepted and understood by recovery agencies, the community and armed forces (if deployed).
- Recovery management arrangements are most effective when they recognise the **complex, dynamic and protracted** nature of recovery processes and the changing needs of affected individuals, families and groups within the community over time.

- The management of recovery is best approached from a **community development** perspective. It is most effective when conducted at the local level with the active participation of the affected community and a strong reliance on local capacities and expertise. Recovery is not just a matter for the statutory agencies - the private sector, the voluntary sector and the wider community will play a crucial role.
- Recovery management is most effective when agencies involved in **human welfare** have a major role in all levels of decision-making which may influence the well-being and recovery of the affected community.
- Recovery is best achieved where the recovery process begins from the **moment the emergency begins**.
- Recovery is most effective where recovery management arrangements provide a **comprehensive and integrated framework** for managing all potential emergencies and where assistance measures are provided in a timely, fair and equitable manner and are sufficiently flexible to respond to a diversity of community needs.

### The recovery process comprises the following overlapping activities:

- **Consequence management** – Taking steps to prevent the escalation of the impacts of an emergency (e.g. restoring essential services following a disruption or securing evacuated premises).
- **Restoring** the well-being of individuals, communities and the infrastructure which supports them – Emergencies can have enduring impacts and timely action will be needed to identify those impacts coupled with longer term engagement to ensure that they are adequately addressed.
- **Exploiting** opportunities afforded by emergencies – Establishing what happened, identifying where improvements could be made, and applying lessons learned. Taking steps to adapt systems, services and infrastructure affected by emergencies to meet future needs.

In order to develop Recovery capability, it is essential that roles and responsibilities have been identified and that the people involved have the necessary capacity to deliver. Starting recovery during the response phase does mean staff capacity is depleted as the same staff will in many cases, be involved in response.

Once the response phase is completed and recovery has begun in earnest, staff capacity may still remain limited with public expectations regarding a 'return to normal' of Council services, reducing capacity for recovery.

As recovery is coordinated via the Hampshire Isle of Wight LRF there are opportunities to gain information, expertise and share knowledge across the county.

## Impacts of an Emergency

Emergencies affect communities in a wide variety of ways. To understand what recovery comprises, one first needs to map out who is affected and how emergencies affect them.

One of the first stages in recovery will be the creation of a community impact assessment. It is likely to develop over time from a rough and ready assessment, probably covering the more immediate needs of people, to a more refined assessment of longer-term humanitarian needs and economic development.

To understand how emergencies can affect individuals and their communities – and thus the scope of the recovery effort, it is important to understand how emergencies impact upon the environment individuals live and work in. There are some standard interlinked broad categories of impact from which individuals and communities will need to recover:

<b>Humanitarian Assistance (including health and social impacts)</b>	Physical impacts (including individuals' health, housing, financial needs) Psychological impacts Deaths
<b>Economic</b>	Economic and business recovery; education and skills
<b>Environmental and Infrastructure</b>	Disruption to daily life (e.g. educational establishments, welfare services, transport system, food distribution etc) Disruption to utilities/ essential services

Whether, and, at what level action needs to be taken, will depend on the nature, scale and severity of the emergency itself and the impact it has had on the community it serves.

Elected Members/ Parish Councils /Community and Voluntary Groups can play a critical role in the impact assessment process, identifying problems and vulnerabilities in their community that may require priority attention and feeding them back to the relevant recovery group. They also have an important role in disseminating consistent credible information and advice back to the community, maintaining community cohesion and providing public reassurance.

It is vital that following the impact assessment process (which will be an iterative process occurring throughout the recovery phase), any resulting actions are accurately captured, and progress monitored.

# COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Strategy

## Strategic Aims

The following strategic aim has been proposed to guide recovery in Hart:

*Working with the Hampshire Local Resilience Forum, to restore to the “New Normal” the social, economic and political well-being of the communities of Hart and operation of the District Council services.*

## Objectives

The following objectives have been created based on the framework set out by the Local Resilience Forum Recovery Plan:

1. Agree community and operational visions for the “New Normal”.
2. Help the communities, the voluntary sector and businesses of Hart to recover and move forward as speedily as possible through an effective, collaborative, and well-communicated multi-agency response led by the Council.
3. Develop and maintain an impact assessment for the COVID-19 pandemic in Hart
4. Develop a concise, balanced, and affordable (whatever that means now) recovery action plan.
5. Help those traumatised by their experience of the impact of COVID-19 on themselves, their families and their loved ones to address their trauma (and grieve their loss).
6. Celebrate and commemorate the contributions made to support our communities through the incident and give the public opportunities to express their appreciation.
7. Ensure we build on the good work in response, to retain good engagement with key stakeholders including other public sector organisations, voluntary sector, business sector and Parish and Town Councils.
8. Use recovery as an opportunity to rethink the way the Council provides its service and support our staff in the change management process.
9. Cherish and implement the learning from the incident, including capturing best practice and reflect on future priorities in the light of collective experience.

## Targets

As part of the recovery strategy, targets and milestones for the recovery will be established and agreed. The community should be involved in establishing these targets. These targets provide a means of measuring progress with the recovery process and may assist in deciding when specific recovery activities can be scaled down.

**The following targets/milestones\* are being developed (with SMART proxy indicators to be identified):**

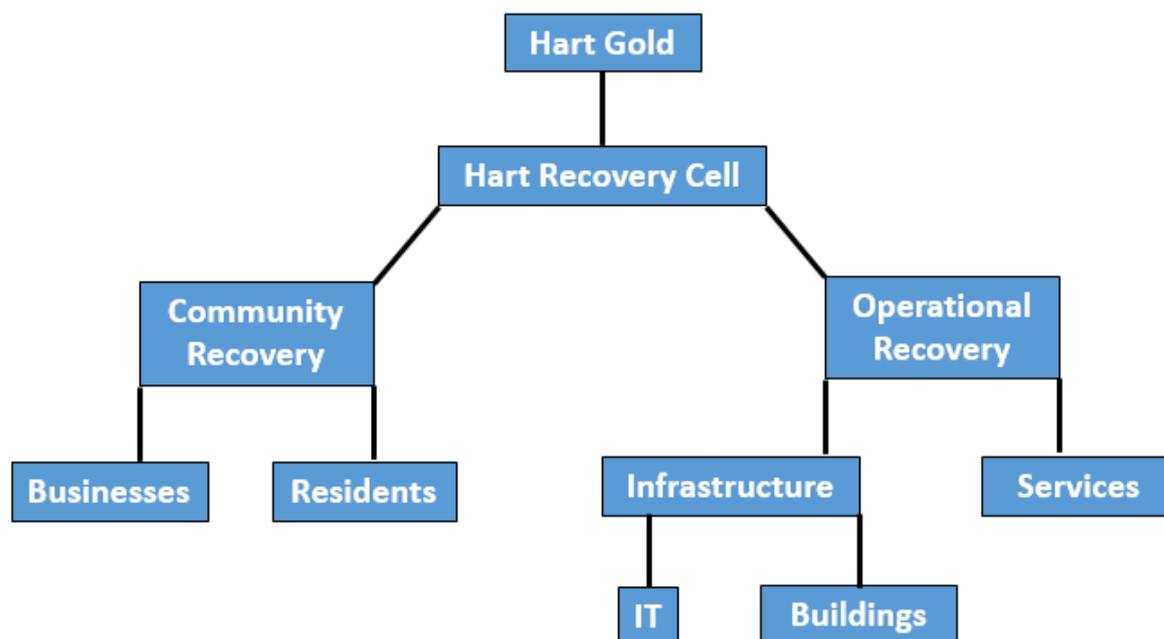
1. Agree membership of Hart Recovery Group and subgroups
2. Agree 'new normal' for service provision
3. Restoration of 'new normal' service provision
4. Post-incident review of response - what went well, could be improved, lessons learnt
5. Steps to address staff exhaustion and leave entitlement, restoring training etc.
6. Planning and preparation for resurgence of COVID-19
7. Identify opportunities to build in economic & social resilience
8. Re-building economic activity and business functionality - support to entrepreneurs
9. Restoration of democratic processes.

### **Representation on Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Working Groups**

The LRF Recovery Coordinating Group will have the following functional Working Groups. To ensure good engagement and the sharing of knowledge and expertise it is recommended that the following staff will be Hart DC's representatives on these groups:

1. LRF Recovery Coordinating Group – Joint Chief Executive (Patricia Hughes)
2. Communications - Communications Manager
3. Finance and Resources - Head of Corporate Services (S151)
4. Environment and Infrastructure, including, Logistics --Head of Environment and Technical Services
5. Business and Economic – Head of Place
6. Health and Welfare including Social Care, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing, Education and Children's Social Care, Voluntary and Community engagement and development - Head of Community

## Hart Group Structure



**Hart Recovery Cell** - To coordinate and oversee the restoration of the wider community and all Council functions to a 'new normal' and to ensure Hart's recovery is coordinated with the LRF's recovery response as required by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. To look for and encourage opportunities to build back better and achieve wider reach benefits.

**Operational Recovery** - To ensure that the delivery of services, and the infrastructures and finance that supports this is restored as quickly and efficiently as reasonably possible, and where feasible to identify opportunities that have arisen from the incident to build back better. To consider and monitor the health and wellbeing of Hart staff and recommend measures to address any issues identified.

**Community Recovery** - to identify the essential groups who most require support or who, if supported, would facilitate wider community recovery. To look for opportunities for encouraging future resilience in the community and to determine the most effective and efficient means for achieving both recovery and resilience.

**Services** - To prioritise and develop timelines and strategies for the restoration of all Council services to the agreed New Normal (if applicable) and to aid the restoration of these services. To support the Operational Recovery where needed.

**Infrastructure** - To develop strategies to address likely issues and constraints that could affect Council infrastructure and in turn constrain the restoration of Council services to the New Normal. To support the Operational Recovery where needed.

**Residents** - To determine strategies in collaboration with key partners to support those residents in Hart who are adversely affected and/or those key groups who if supported could aid wider community rehabilitation. To support the Community Recovery where needed.

**Businesses** - To determine strategies in collaboration with key partners to support effective, efficient and timely recovery of businesses within Hart. To support the Community Recovery where needed.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date and Time:** Tuesday, 16 June 2020 at 7pm

**Place:** Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fleet

**Present:**

### **COUNCILLORS**

Axam, Davies, Dorn, Drage, Farmer, Lamb, Makepeace-Browne, Smith, Wright, Wildsmith, Worlock (Chairman)

**In Attendance:** Crampton, Radley, Forster

#### **Officers:**

Daryl Phillips	Joint Chief Executive
Patricia Hughes	Joint Chief Executive
Helen Vincent	Committee Services
Celia Wood	Committee Services

### **1 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

Members agreed to the suspension of Standing Orders nos 9.3 (Show of Hands for Voting), 22.1 (Standing to Speak) and 22.2 (Chairman Standing).

### **2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Smith was elected Vice-Chairman

### **3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 18 February 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received.

### **5 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENT**

Councillor Worlock thanked Councillor Crookes for his hard work as Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee last year and welcomed all new Members.

### **6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Farmer declared he is the Chairman for the Swimming Club based at Hart Leisure Centre and Councillor Wildsmith declared he is the Treasurer for the Aid Relief Group.

## **7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (ITEMS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA)**

None.

## **8 COUNCIL RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AND NEXT STEPS**

This report provides an overview of the Council's work to support the district during the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and also provided details on the Council's emerging recovery plan to support the district in the coming months.

This report only represents an initial, high level assessment of the current position. It is a 'holding' report. The situation is still live, the pandemic is still ongoing (albeit apparently decreasing in intensity), and more work was required to give a more informed assessment of the implications for the Council. Furthermore, informed reports particularly on the financial implications and the Recovery Plan will be prepared for consideration in due course.

*NB. Appendix 2 is Confidential.*

Members discussed the speed and effectiveness of response by Hart District Council and decisions made, in particular, point 5.7 on the report in relation to Business Grants. Particular issues associated with the distribution of the Grant were discussed including the lack of any business rate infrastructure and flexibility in service delivery following the outsourcing of the business rate function, the need to use the current service provider to distribute the Grant, the lack of communication from the supplier, and the frustration that this all caused to businesses who could not make contact with the supplier.

Members also discussed section 5.6 of the report and Hart's quick response to emergency discharge from hospitals. Members asked if we can improve our responses if there is a second peak and it was confirmed that a staff survey has been carried out regarding business continuity.

Members discussed the financial impact of the pandemic on the service delivery and how staff resources had been dispersed across the Council. It was agreed that a more informed report would be prepared for a later meeting of the Committee to consider the longer-term implications of the pandemic and its impact upon Council resources going forward.

Members were advised that Hart were guided by the LRF (Local Resilience Forum) who's objectives and goals are very similar to the rest of the County. Recovery is community assessed and there is a Community Impact Assessment Survey coming out shortly.

Hart will come out of the response phase and into recovery phase as guided by the LRF. Hart's recovery will continue in shadow until a decision is made when to move fully into the recovery phase.

The Chairman reiterated that when the response phase closes and Hart enters the recovery phase this will be subject to further scrutiny and Members will have the chance to further assess the decisions made during this emergency situation.

## **DECISION**

Appendix 1 – Recovery Plan was agreed.

Appendix 2 – Members noted that it was intended that a more detailed Financial Report would be prepared for the Committee to be considered in August once finalised by the Council's Finance Team

## **9 MEMBER WORKSHOP**

The O&S Work Programme for the coming year 2020/2021 was discussed and considered.

## **DECISION**

The Committee Members agreed to assist Cabinet and help with their ambitions, initiatives and policies being discussed going forward.

Cabinet suggested assistance with:

- Becoming more efficient with budgets and the challenges they bring.
- Digitalise initiatives.
- Reorganisation of development control and planning, focusing in particular on CIL.
- The way in which we deliver CCTV, its benefits to our community, safety and costs involved.
- Fleet Town Centre Regeneration which is important to our residents.
- To go back a couple of years and look at old work programmes to ensure nothing has been forgotten.

Next Meeting due: 14 July 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.