

Report to Cabinet
16 December 2020
Report of Chief executive officer
Subject COVID-19 recovery plan progress report

Item

5

Purpose

To consider the progress of and the update to the council's COVID-19 recovery plan, which was agreed by Cabinet and Full Council in June 2020.

Recommendation

To note the progress made in the delivery of the COVID-19 recovery plan and the main actions contained within it.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priorities Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment, Inclusive economy and People living well.

Financial implications

Multiple impacts across council budgets.

Ward/s: All Wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Waters - Leader

Contact officers

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Report

Introduction

1. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has required a response at the global, national and local levels. In Norwich, as elsewhere across the United Kingdom, it continues to affect the lives of every resident and business in the city.
2. In June 2020, Cabinet agreed the [Covid-19: A blueprint for recovery](#) which provided an overview of the council's initial response to the virus, and identified a number of priority themes and actions which would to frame the council's – and the city's - recovery.
3. The city council was one of the first councils in the country to publish a comprehensive, forward looking recovery plan from Covid-19. It sets out a number of priority activities that the council feels are crucial to a sustainable recovery and the organisation will continue to track performance against the delivery of the plan and build on it as a 'living' document. Regular updates on progress will be reported to Cabinet.
4. As the recovery blueprint makes clear, the city's response to – and recovery from – the pandemic will require a partnership response. Since the document was developed and published, several discussions have been held with the [Norwich 2040 City Vision](#) partnership to steer the city through the challenges and opportunities ahead.
5. This report provides Cabinet with details of progress made against the plan since the summer. It considers the impacts, successes and challenges faced so far or anticipated in the short to medium term.

Oversight of the city's recovery

6. The Norwich 2040 City Vision represents a shared commitment between local businesses, voluntary sector organisations, Norwich City Council, our schools and universities, and our residents.
7. The vision has never been more important in shaping our future as a city, for the benefit of all residents, businesses and visitors. Considering the additional challenges presented by Covid-19, the newly established Vision Covid-19 Recovery Group has been working together to understand the impact Covid-19 has had, and continues to have on the city and to consider how to keep things on track to reach its 2040 vision.
8. Members of the group (see paragraph 82) hold important interlocking links with key partnerships and organisations across and for the city, as well as the wider vision network. A number of focus areas the group is considering include:
 - a) Communication, consultation and engagement with residents, businesses and community groups
 - b) Inequality in light of Covid-19 (financial, health, digital)
 - c) Becoming a more sustainable city

- d) Mental health and well-being while living with Covid-19
- e) Healthy people: the need for social cohesion, social capital, social networks and social support
- f) Housing and its contribution to the vitality of the city
- g) The future of:
 - i) higher education and the city
 - ii) arts, culture and heritage
 - iii) the city centre

Monitoring the impacts of COVID-19: People, Place and Economy

9. The council has developed a range of key metrics to help support officers, members and other stakeholders to understand the key impacts of Covid-19 on the people, place and economy of Norwich.

People

10. Norwich Covid-19 cases summary as at 6 December 2020:

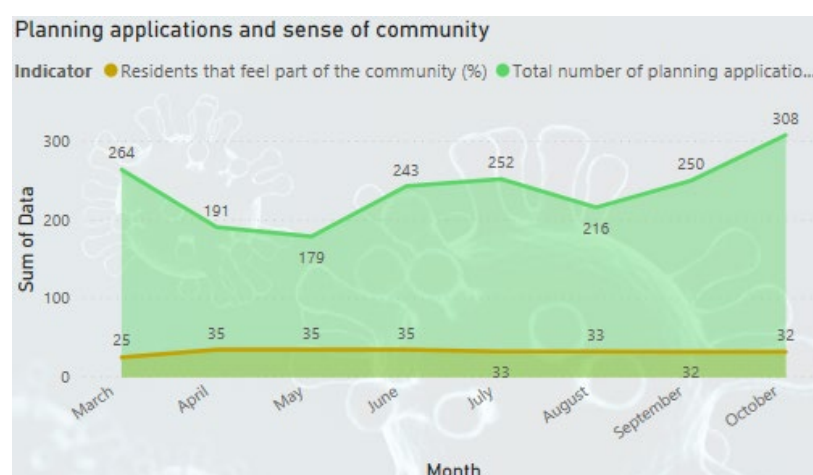
- a) Total number of C-19 cases in Norwich **1,851**
- b) Total number of C-19 deaths in Norwich **24**

11. Norwich Community Response Hub summary as at 31 October 2020:

- a) Total number of food parcels delivered **830**
- b) Total number of prescriptions delivered **855**
- c) Total number of successful support calls **4,767**

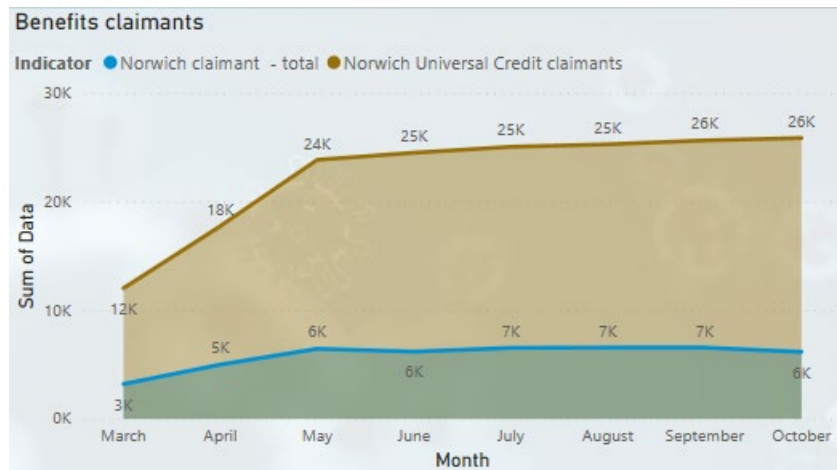
Place

12. The chart below shows two indicators relating to residents feeling part of the community and the number of planning applications received since March.

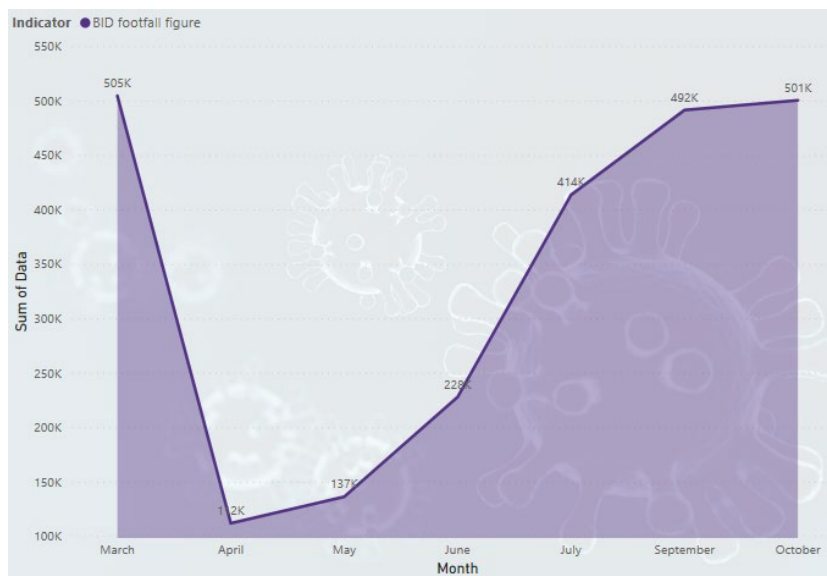


Economy

13. The chart below shows how levels of benefit claims and universal credit claims have increased since the start of the pandemic in Norwich.



14. The chart below shows the levels of footfall in the city centre as captured by the Norwich Business Improvement District.



Doing what we can to keep the city safe

15. Until such time as a vaccine has been distributed widely, all we can do is continue to try to suppress the virus through actions and behaviours. Since November the council has been working hard to try and reduce the rising number of cases prior to the second national lockdown, as well as planning for the easing of lockdown in the run up to Christmas. The following have been put in place:

- formation of a team of **Covid-19 support officers** offering support to businesses and reassurance to residents and visitors that the city is safe. Ahead of the end of the national restrictions ending on 2 December and the city moving into Tier 2, the support team has been bolstered with the recruitment of trained security personnel to support the safe reopening of the night time economy. In total, the council has recruited a team of 26

support officers and security personnel who will be deployed in shifts through to the New Year and beyond.

- b) a raft of **communications activities**, both internal and external across a range of platforms to ensure people are kept up to date with current regulations and know where to get support and advice, and promoting #ProtectNorwich.
- c) improved **signage and visible messaging in the city centre** about how to keep safe, including on lamp posts and bollards.
- d) a continued proactive approach to **enforcement activities** to ensure public safety, working closely with local businesses and the police.
- e) running the **Local Co-ordinating Group** for Norwich.
- f) continuing engagement in **county wide emergency response activities** such as the multi-agency Strategic co-ordination group and Tactical co-ordination group.
- g) the broadening out of attendance at the **tactical co-ordination group** to Heads of Service to provide greater resilience in our internal emergency response capability.
- h) continued **winter support** for residents who feel unready to stop shielding and a Winter Fund held with the Norfolk Assistance scheme to provide food, fuel payments and living allowances for those impacted by Covid until March 2021.
- i) developing **enhanced contact tracing** with Public Health, Norfolk County Council and fellow districts to allow for more robust contact tracing of residents potentially impacted by clusters of positive cases to provide support to isolate and further contact tracing.

Recovery themes and actions

16. It is important that the council not only focuses on how, as an organisation, it recovers and responds to challenges faced as a result of the pandemic but also the leading role it plays in the wider recovery of the city. The priority themes from the plan are helping to shape the council's approach to recovery. Each theme has a set of associated key actions, the progress of which is detailed in this section of the report.

Securing the council's finances

17. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to securing the council's finances:

Action	Status	Comments
Closely monitor and update budget impact analysis and regularly update CLT and Cabinet	Ongoing	CLT have moved to monthly monitoring of in year budget position (previous quarterly)

Lobby government to ensure that Norwich City Council, and local government more widely, is fully compensated for the financial impacts of C19	Ongoing	A range of measures including letters to the PM, Chancellor, local MPs and via the LGA and wider Norfolk officer and political networks
Conduct a corporate review of all 2020-21 revenue budgets to identify areas for immediately reducing in-year expenditure through additional controls on non-essential spend and recruitment	Complete	Now forecasting to bring 2020/21 in on budget, having forecast a £7m over spend in June. £3.3m in-year savings identified together with additional resources from Gov't.
Review the capital programme to ensure that the schemes still reflect the council's current priorities and that these are affordable in the new financial landscape	Ongoing	Capital programme reviewed in terms of both deliverability and affordability. A number of schemes have been deferred into next financial year due to the pandemic restrictions. Proposed 5 year capital programme contained in the draft budget proposals to December Cabinet.
Update the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy, to understand the short to medium implications for savings requirements and use of reserves	Ongoing	Updated financial forecasts presented to Cabinet in November with a further update as part of draft budget report to December Cabinet.
Commence the process for setting the budget for 2021-22 and provide further detail to Cabinet in July on the approach and timeline	Ongoing	Draft budget proposals to December Cabinet ahead of consultation.

18. The pandemic continues to have a significant impact on the council's budget during the 2020-21 financial year and over the medium term. The impact of increased costs and reduced income is being felt and, although central government has provided additional funding, it is far from enough to plug the funding gap that has developed.

19. Last month's Spending Review was high level, and we are working through the detail as more information is shared, but the Chancellor's key headlines for local government included:

- a) providing local authorities with £670m to support four million households that are least able to afford council tax payments
- b) additional £1.55bn to local authorities to meet additional pressures as a result of Covid-19
- c) support to local authorities to compensate for irrecoverable loss of council tax and business rates revenues in 2020-21 and later years
- d) extending the existing support for sales, fees and charges for a further three months until the end of June 2021
- e) maintaining the existing new homes bonus for a further year
- f) a reduction in borrowing rates through the public works loan board (PWLB), but ending the use of PWLB for investment property
- g) pay rises in the public sector paused next year for all those earning above £24,000 except frontline NHS doctors and nurses.

20. The council is doing all it can to mitigate the wider impacts of the pandemic. However, it is currently unknown how much Covid-19 support we will receive in

2021-22. Also, over the longer term, it is hard to predict the full extent of economic recovery required and what measures will be needed to address the financial deficit.

Modernising the council; reimagining local services

21. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to modernising the council and reimagining local services:

Action	Status	Comments
Implement changes to the internal layout and other safety measures within city hall to support social distancing as more staff return to the office when it is appropriate to do so, with a risk assessment of the building carried out and unions engaged	Complete	Recognising that long-term working from home may have mental health and wellbeing implications for staff, significant effort has gone into making City Hall Covid-secure. Staff are now able to work from the office for part of the week with prior agreement on a risk-assessed basis.
Continue to allow staff to work from home where possible, striking a balance between home and office-based working and allowing flexibility for staff	Complete	Continued investment in IT infrastructure to improve mobile working capability, with new laptops to be rolled out to all staff by April 2021. Staff can also request access to office furniture and are able to apply for home working tax relief.
Take forward an organisation wide review of service delivery, to look at reimagining how services are delivered in future	On target	An organisation-wide service review process was commenced in September, which builds on the experiences of the pandemic to look at how services might be delivered differently. First set of service reviews to conclude by April with the second set to conclude in July.
Recast its service transformation plans in light of this service review, to be taken forward as part of the 2021/22 budget and business planning cycle	On target	As above. Proposals for a new council transformation programme will go to Cabinet for approval in February.
Develop a customer experience and digital strategy to set out the council's vision and approach to services.	On target	Digital Strategy currently being developed. Will be presented to Cabinet in February.
Review the decisions that have been taken as part of the crisis response to stop, start or amend service delivery – and the experience of working in different ways – to consider lessons learned and apply them to service areas over the longer-term	Complete	Ongoing process with lessons learned feeding through to service reviews.
Use the principles of recovery engagement to recalibrate the compact between the council and residents, communities, businesses and other city stakeholders	On target	Covid legacy planning to reflect the local environment is progressing well with engaged stakeholders. Work streams identified to build on works and improve overall systems for residents.

22. Covid-19 has forced the council to change how it operates and how it delivers services to residents. Whilst some of this change has been hard, the organisation now has the capability to work and deliver differently – to build on the technological changes made to become a modern, flexible organisation with the potential to change its culture and improve staff wellbeing.

23. The newly formed Customer, IT and digital board provides the governance and oversight for key IT and customer facing projects that will unlock efficiency savings and provide a better experience for customers. An IT road map is in place to plan and prioritise projects and a draft customer experience and digital strategy will be completed early in the New Year.
24. A series of service reviews have commenced which build on the lessons from service changes delivered through the first Covid lockdown and place customers at the heart of change. Based on the ideas being developed from service areas, work has commenced to re-shape our transformation programme and to put in place the necessary capability across the council to deliver change effectively.
25. Officers from across the council have formed a mental health and wellbeing working group, which has been set up to champion positive mental wellbeing in the workplace and help bring about a catalyst for change. A framework of core standards for the organisation to adopt relating to positive mental health and wellbeing is being developed. In addition, a number of mental health first aiders have been trained, to create a trusted source of support for colleagues who need it.
26. The council has adopted a more flexible way of working by supporting many employees to work from home and improved laptops will be rolled out in the New Year to improve remote working capability. In addition, measures have been put in place to ensure that City Hall is Covid secure so that people who do need to come into the building for their wellbeing can do so.

Supporting the most vulnerable

27. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to supporting the most vulnerable:

Action	Status	Comments
Work proactively with partners through the Pathways programme to develop a sustainable approach to tackling homelessness in the city	On target	Work continues to support people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Since March, 120 people have been moved into emergency accommodation with the vast majority now in more sustainable accommodation. Pathways extended to 6 days a week with twice weekly street counts.
Over the longer-term, work with Pathways, the county council and the voluntary and community sector to look at pathways out of poverty for the most vulnerable. This will look at training and skills opportunities and measures to move people closer to the labour market and into employment	On target	A cross-Norfolk strategic housing partnership has been established to take a county-wide approach to tackle homelessness and deliver the 'No homelessness in Norfolk' strategy which was developed over the summer. The partnership brings together the county council, district councils, health services and emergency services. As well as short-term response, the partnership is also looking at access to skills and training.
Work with domestic abuse support providers to signpost victims of domestic abuse to the support on offer and to work with front line teams within the council to train staff to spot signs of domestic abuse	On target	Learning programme agreed at November safeguarding group. Work in progress with HR & Learning to

		identify appropriate training programmes and providers. Norwich City Council to Chair Norfolk DA strategic commissioning group to design and deliver holistic programme for victims, perpetrators and their families. Programme of engagement with professionals referring to DA support services, with service providers and service users to take place in early 2021.
Hold virtual internal and engagement events to gather evidence and lessons from the council's long-term approach to reducing inequalities and crisis support	On target	Ongoing engagement is taking place via a number of partnerships, including Norfolk Strategic Homelessness Group, Good Economy Commission, Norfolk Equality and Human Rights Council, Reducing Inequalities Target Areas Network, Financial Inclusion Consortium, and Norwich Food Poverty Action.
Use these principles and lessons learnt to build on existing collaborative and asset-based approaches to tackling pre-existing and emerging financial and digital inclusion in the city, as part of tackling wider inequality	On target	Ongoing through continuing work on City Vision Covid-19 Recovery group work strands, community participation strategy, Reducing Inequalities Target Areas, projects being developed through the Good Economy Commission, financial inclusion projects, including new non-commercial debt policy.

28. Analysis of the impacts of Covid-19 suggests that socio-economic, health and other inequalities in the city are being exacerbated by the pandemic, as shown earlier in this report. Whilst the level of support provided by the council is reducing as we move from crisis to recovery, there is a long-term need to maintain holistic support for some residents who face particular disadvantage.

29. The council continues its good practice around this through the work of the Specialist support team as well as multi-agency approaches such as the Early Help Hub, Pathways and Reducing Inequalities Target Area networks. To gather further evidence and lessons from the council's long-term approach to reducing inequalities and crisis support, a newly appointed Community Conversations officer will shortly begin a series of localised engagement work.

30. In September, Cabinet approved a new policy on non-commercial debt which seeks to better recognise and work proactively with vulnerable people. It aims to:

- a) ensure a consistent approach to the management of debts across the authority
- b) recognise the varying causes of debt and adjust recovery procedures accordingly
- c) reduce the likelihood of financial hardship for customers by ensuring individuals financial circumstances are considered on a case by case basis
- d) enable the signposting of debtors to debt advice as appropriate

31. Work continues on administering self-isolation payments to those who need them and the ambitious approach developed, not only provides access to the £500 payment for those on low incomes, but also assesses their wider financial and support needs, such as access to food and medicine. As of 3 December, £115,000 had been paid out by the city council.
32. One of the biggest challenges faced since Covid-19 came along is supporting an increasing number of people presenting to the council as homeless. The council accommodated 120 rough sleepers, or those at risk of rough sleeping, through the 'Everybody In' emergency measures. 104 of these people have now been moved out of emergency accommodation and into more settled accommodation.
33. Of those who remain in emergency accommodation, we are working with partners to source a sustainable long-term solution. In May, Cabinet agreed the Greater Norwich [homelessness strategy](#) which sets out our approach – working with neighbouring districts – to preventing and responding to homelessness, as well as supporting those at risk of and recovering from domestic abuse.
34. The council has recently agreed to extend the existing Pathways contract for a year starting 01/04/2021, ensuring that the partnership remains in existence to help address rough sleeping and support people with complex needs in Norwich. Further to this, through the Greater Norwich Homelessness forum steering group, there is now an arrangement with The Feed to provide employment and skills services to people with complex needs.

Business and the local economy

35. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to business and local economy:

Action	Status	Comments
Work with the Norwich BID, Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, police and county council to implement physical measures and signage in the city centre to support social distancing	Ongoing	New signage implemented ahead of end of second national lockdown on 2 December.
Use licensing powers to support businesses – particularly those in the hospitality sector – where appropriate to vary their use of outside space, whilst ensuring that people with disabilities can access pavements and move around the city safely	Ongoing	A range of initiatives implemented including closure of roads to promote pedestrian/cycling access and use of outside space for restaurants including land next to city hall.
Continue to identify opportunities to promote sustainable travel in the city centre – with a focus on walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable travel as appropriate	Ongoing	In addition to the above, the city council has worked with Norfolk CC to bring the trial of e-scooters for hire to the city.
Work with City Fibre and the county council to deliver full fibre broadband in Norwich	On target	Work due to commence spring 2021.
Where there is evidence of malpractice, assess whether action can be taken against employers who fail to provide a safe working environment	Ongoing	The council will have 20x Covid-19 support officers giving out government message of hands, face and space. These officers supported by 6x SIA wardens and the 3x enforcement teams will also be identifying issues where employees are being put at risk. Enforcement action will be

		proportionate following the giving of advice.
Continue to deliver grants and wider support to businesses	Ongoing	Overall, the city council paid out £40m in business grants during the first wave of the pandemic. As of 3 December, an additional £1m had been paid out to via nearly 600 grants to businesses impacted by the second national lockdown.
Engage with business, representative groups and relevant public authorities, and monitor relevant data sources and emerging national and local analysis, to understand the challenges facing businesses and the wider economic impact of C19	Ongoing	Economic development team continues to engage with businesses, representative groups and relevant public authorities, and monitoring relevant data sources and the emerging national and local analysis, to understand the challenges facing businesses and the wider economic impact.
Work in partnership to develop appropriate solutions to the challenges identified, including through council planning, licensing and enforcement functions and by working with partners on issues including skills and pathways to work	Ongoing	The council will work in partnership with Norwich BID, the constabulary and the county council to ensure C-19 safety in the city by providing new street signage, display boards and projecting information onto the castle. Additionally, we are supporting the hospitality sector to open successfully and keep their customers safe.
Establish the Good Economy Commission as the lead on the economy theme under the City Vision Steering board, to make recommendations across the City Vision partnership to support an inclusive recovery over the medium-term	On target	GEC established and has scoped a number of work streams to gather evidence and shape recommendations around the future of the Norwich economy. It will be inviting engagement with residents and other stakeholders across the city over coming months.
Consider how the council's role as an anchor institution can support an inclusive economy through the use of council assets, contractual, recruitment and procurement levers	Pending decision	This is in scope for the council service reviews plus wider work on this will be taken forward once the Good Economy Commission provides recommendations.
Review the Norwich Economic Strategy 2019-24 to identify any new actions required to respond to C19	On target	Review underway, and will take account of the important contribution the education sector makes to our local economy, the role of VCSEs (key employer) and community economic development
Develop and deliver a Town Investment Plan to get access to £25m funding for investment in the city	On target	Formal approval of £25m Town Deal plus £1m accelerated payment achieved in October. Proposals being developed to ensure delivery, overseen by Towns Deal Board.
Engage in wider recovery plans with partners including the New Anglia Growth Hub and the Norfolk Resilience Forum	Ongoing	Ongoing close engagement with LEP and NRF to promote wider recovery and support to business.

36. The impact of lockdown on the city centre has been significant. The council's objective is to support the local economy whilst doing what it can to protect Norwich. Colleagues from across the organisation continue to work hard to support the local and regional response to Covid-19. The council has overseen the distribution of over £40m in grants to approximately 3,000 businesses through the small business, and retail, hospitality and leisure schemes, and the discretionary grants fund.
37. Our environmental health team continue to work in partnership with the Norwich Business Improvement District, Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, police and local businesses to make sure the right adjustments are made so that people in the city can shop, eat and drink with confidence.
38. Following consultation, Exchange Street and St Benedict's Street now have traffic control schemes, widened pavements and areas where businesses can place tables and chairs outside. Additionally, businesses have been given permission to use areas of council owned land.
39. These measures help to create a better environment for pedestrians and cyclists, and further restrict vehicle access to the city centre. We are ambitious to go further, and have worked up proposals to trial vehicle restrictions in other areas of in the city, including Magdalen Street which we will be pressing the county council to implement.
40. Local authorities have been given government funding (£8 per capita) for five wardens and five track and trace officers. These resources will in part work with the police in managing the Night Time Economy, giving advice on Covid-19 secure measures, social distancing and identifying any breach of regulations.
41. Our Economic Development team continues to engage with businesses, representative groups and relevant public authorities, and monitoring relevant data sources and the emerging national and local analysis, to understand the challenges facing businesses and the wider economic impact.
42. In the short-term this will provide an in-depth appreciation of the opportunities and challenges faced by the Norwich business community during the pandemic. In the long term, we will have better information to inform the decision-making process in developing local policies to support the local economy.
43. Work to deliver a full fibre broadband network in Norwich is due to begin in in spring next year. A local delivery team will be up to full strength by the end of December with build contractors appointed by the end of March 2021.
44. Through proposals submitted to the [Town Deals fund](#), the government announced that Norwich will receive £25m in funding for investment in regeneration, skills and enterprise infrastructure.
45. Norwich is one of only seven areas across the country to receive a Towns Deal and that we received the full amount bid for. Developing the bid has been a true partnership approach, working with many of our Norwich 2040 City Vision partners through the Town Deals Board to develop and submit our proposals.
46. This investment has the potential to create a step-change in the local enterprise environment, with the money being used to deliver a range of projects across two packages, as outlined below.

1- Skills and enterprise infrastructure

47. This package of projects supports how we will grow the digital and creative economy and ensure our residents and businesses have the advanced skills in digital, construction and engineering they need to prosper:

- a) **Digital hub** – a new city centre workspace with start-up and grow-on space for digital businesses
- b) **The Halls** – investment to update and refurbish the venue including the development of state-of-the-art visual media, making space for collaboration and high value cross-sector partnerships between culture, digital and technology
- c) **Digi-tech factory** – a new skills facility providing digital tech, engineering and design courses
- d) **Advanced construction and engineering centre** – a new technological advanced training facility, supporting the application of digital technology to construction, manufacturing and engineering sectors.

2- Urban regeneration

48. These projects offer opportunities for significant levels of housing growth and employment space creation to accommodate the needs of a growing city:

- a) **East Norwich** – investment to accelerate the development of a new high quality urban quarter in east Norwich
- b) **Revolving fund** – investment to unlock brownfield sites to deliver modern homes and workspaces for the growing economy
- c) **Public realm** – investment to enhance the city centre public and urban spaces and improve connectivity and navigation
- d) **Branding** – communicating what the city has to offer by developing a commercial proposition for Norwich as **the place** for business and a city to live, learn and invest in.

49. Partnership working continues to prove successful with the formation of the Good Economy Commission, who has scoped a number of work streams to gather evidence and shape recommendations around the future of the Norwich economy. It will be inviting engagement with residents and other stakeholders across the city over the coming months.

Housing, regeneration and development

50. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to housing, regeneration and development:

Action	Status	Comments
Restart council house repairs and maintenance programmes and work with Norwich Norse Buildings to ensure the backlog is cleared	Complete	Repairs and maintenance recommenced following the end of the first national lockdown. The council continues to monitor progress with NNB.

Reintroduce services to let council homes and reintroduce its housing options policies	Complete	The service was restarted following the end of the first national lockdown.
Support people in private sector rented accommodation, including implementing a private renters charter and taking action against sub-standard accommodation	On target	Charter agreed by Cabinet in March followed by a communications campaign.
Prepare, submit and implement the Town Investment Plan to maximise up to £25m of investment in the regeneration of Norwich	Complete	Towns Deal now agreed.
Make progress on the Greater Norwich Local Plan to put in place a framework to guide development in the city and encourage it to be well designed and genuinely sustainable	On target	Accelerated timetable agreed, with the GNLP to be presented to January 2021 Cabinet.
Ensure that infrastructure to support growth is delivered in a timely manner, with delivery of affordable housing maximised, and planning powers used effectively to ensure delivery of priorities	On target	Plans progress to build up to 300 new council homes across a number of sites in the city, with HRA funding invested in a new housing delivery team.
Make the most of its own land holdings and financial capability to maximise rates of housing delivery through exemplary homes that meet the needs of the people of Norwich, and develop a pipeline of sites that can be delivered over the medium to long-term	On target	All 39 properties released for sale by Norwich Regeneration Ltd since July have now been reserved by prospective purchasers. Further properties expected to be released spring 2021.
Through its wholly owned housing company, Norwich Regeneration Limited, build 74 new homes at the Rayne Park development in Bowthorpe	On target	See above.
Take forward the redevelopment of the former council depot at Mile Cross as a council housing-led scheme, to deliver c200 new council homes	On target	Plans progressing, with a report to Cabinet in November setting out a proposed way forward, subsequently agreed.
Begin the master planning process for the regeneration of East Norwich, which has the potential to deliver 4,000 new homes and create 6,000 new jobs	On target	East Norwich Partnership Board began meeting in July to oversee master planning process. Tender out to procure master planning partners, to be presented to February Cabinet for approval.

51. Delivering against the council's housing, regeneration and development objectives will be a vital part of the city's longer-term recovery. Development and regeneration will not only be necessary to provide the homes and jobs that are needed but the recovery of the construction sector will also provide important employment opportunities. The procurement process is underway for the regeneration of East Norwich, which has the potential to deliver 4,000 new homes and create 6,000 new jobs. A report on a proposed master planning partner will be taken to Cabinet in February 2021.

52. As the housing market thrives locally, the new homes being built via Norwich Regeneration Ltd at the Rayne Park development in Bowthorpe are selling strongly. Since July, 100% of the 39 properties released for sale have now been reserved by prospective purchasers. Conversion rates in terms of viewings to sales are very positive, with one in three viewings securing a deposit.

53. Last month Cabinet considered a report on the council's approach to the delivery of around 300 council homes across a number of sites in the city

including Mile Cross, Argyle Street and Threescore in Bowthorpe and agreed with the recommendation to increase our in-house capacity to build out these sites.

54. We will now take forward a process to design and recruit to a new housing delivery team over the coming months to oversee the development of new council houses at these sites, and others, which may be added to the pipeline for social housing. Work on designing the three schemes in question has continued over the summer and we expect work to begin on site next year.

55. As pressure on housing supply in the city continues to increase and the waiting list for social housing grows, it's crucial that we continue to build new council homes over the coming years, alongside the development of high quality homes for private sale and rent through our wholly owned development company, Norwich Regeneration Ltd.

Arts, culture and heritage

56. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to arts, culture and heritage:

Action	Status	Comments
Work with the arts, heritage and culture sector to enable the city's institutions and events to re-open in a safe way when it is appropriate to do so	Ongoing	The council worked with the Royal Norwich Theatre to support successful delivery of the Interlude festival over the summer.
Engage closely with the sector to understand the issues facing them and seek solutions together, including working with national arts and culture organisations as required	Ongoing	Continued close engagement through a range of forums.
At the appropriate time, work to deliver council run events, including to celebrate the hard work of the city over this period, in line with social distancing requirements	On hold	
Work with 2040 City Vision partners to develop a culture strategy for Norwich, which places the importance of arts, culture and heritage at the centre of the city's recovery	On target	Discussions with City Vision partners have begun.

57. The sector has been greatly affected by Covid-19 with the closure of businesses, charities and organisations during the lockdown and the cancellation of marquee events. Arts, culture and heritage are central to the city's vision for the future. The sector creates jobs and is fundamental to the wellbeing of residents, to the city's attractiveness as a place to invest or visit, and to the creation of an innovative and vibrant city that drives growth across the region.

58. In a bid to bring tourists back to the city, Visit Norwich, Visit East of England and Norwich City Council have worked together to take part in a regional campaign to promote visitors returning to the East of England.

59. The Norwich Business Improvement District and VisitNorwich also launched a new film, 'Norwich, the Next Chapter' aimed at inspiring confidence in people across Norfolk to safely return to Norwich.

60. The council has worked with the arts, heritage and culture sector to enable some of the city's institutions and events to re-open in a safe way. In August and September INTERLUDE took place, a programme of live performances

and participatory activities from Norwich Theatre and Lost in Translation Circus in a temporary outdoor venue in Chapelfield Gardens. This was supported by Norwich City Council and the Norwich Business Improvement District and in association with Aspoll.

61. October was Black History Month. This is something which the council provides grant funding for and is more than any other authority. In previous years, Norfolk Black History Month has proved to be one of the most successful in the country in terms of numbers of people coming to events and wider engagement. For obvious reasons, the programme for this year was different with most events being held virtually.
62. Colleagues in our events team have worked with Black History Month resulting in artists producing some temporary murals in places across the city, including Exchange Street. We are also working closely with the Chair of Norfolk Black History Month to shape how we can get a permanent mural in the city.
63. The Norwich 2040 Cultural Compact board has been formed and work has begun on developing a culture strategy for the city. This will include input from local and regional sectoral expertise, have cultural organisations at its heart and lead to the production of a collective plan which places arts, culture and heritage at the centre of the city's recovery.

Climate change and the green economy

64. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to climate change and the green economy:

Action	Status	Comments
Ensure that its Environment Strategy and Action Plan (with input from stakeholders) includes reference to opportunities emerging from the crisis and articulates environmental objectives during the recovery phase	On target	Strategy updated to reflect this.
Build on its strong track record of success to identify further opportunities for reducing carbon emissions across council assets and operations, which has seen a 60% reduction since 2007	Ongoing	Future actions set out in the council's Environment Strategy which was published in August 2020.
Undertake an 'opportunity audit' across the council's place-making activities to identify and prioritise specific opportunities to deliver quantifiable environmental benefits, to supplement the Environment Strategy	On target	Initial work has led to applications being made to the decarbonisation fund for LED lighting retrofitting and for Solar PV/ Battery storage. There is also the potential use of Office for Low Emission Vehicles grants for fleet electrification trial
Consider opportunities to further promote sustainable travel in the city, building on the already well-advanced measures already in place	Ongoing	E-scooters currently be trialled in the city.
Work to ensure that future housing and regeneration schemes are subject to the highest possible environmental standards	Ongoing	Agreed as part of future housing plans.

65. It is suggested that the pandemic is both a prefiguring of the existential threat posed by climate change and also an opportunity to accelerate our collective

response to that threat. As the council and the city looks towards recovery, there is an opportunity to build on existing approaches through council activity and influence others in its role as civic leader.

66. In August, the council published its latest five-year environmental strategy, comprising all major campaigns and priorities for the forthcoming period and highlighting recent progress. A new work programme and target to make the city council's operational carbon emissions net zero by 2030 are among the pathways introduced within the strategy to continue the council's positive trend of environmental improvement.
67. The strategy builds on a string of recent successes for the council, which have been recognised by a number of awards and recommendations, the most recent being identified as one of the top performing councils in the country by Friends of the Earth, for its response to the climate change emergency.
68. Levels of reduction in carbon emissions vary quarterly, but we continue to build on a strong track record of success by identifying further opportunities to reduce emissions across council assets and operations which have resulted in a 62.1% reduction since 2007.
69. In addition, promotion by Roar Power, the city council's 'white label' energy provider, encourages residents to switch such that they can make a positive impact on carbon emissions as it offers 100% renewable electricity as standard on all tariffs and 100% offset gas through an even more eco-friendly tariff.
70. In August, Cabinet approved the City Centre Public Spaces Plan which sets out the council's approach to managing space within the city centre, including green spaces, areas of future development, and the city's main walking, cycling and traffic routes.
71. Transport for Norwich has been awarded £32m of government Transforming Cities Fund providing a total of £58m further worth of sustainable transport investment over the next four years in addition to the investment secured from the Towns Fund for public realm projects.
72. Through the work of the Norwich 2040 City Vision, a Norwich Business Leaders' Climate group has been formed and is in the formative stages of developing its approach and identifying actions to help meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. Possible focus areas include:
 - a) sustainable buildings
 - b) clean transport
 - c) clean energy
 - d) waste and circular economy

Harnessing social capital

73. The blueprint identified the following key actions in relation to harnessing social capital:

Action	Status	Comments
Develop a Community Participation Strategy which looks at how the council can work with communities across the city to enable them to realise the opportunities and respond to the challenges ahead	Behind schedule	Work started to scope the strategy and develop a set of guiding principles but this has been delayed by prioritisation of the team to coordinating local community response to the pandemic.
Work with residents to understand the level of support needed from the council without imposing unnecessary process and allowing communities to define their own local priorities and responses to local challenges	On target	A wealth of information and knowledge has been collected through the Covid community response which will be used to help develop our future strategy.
Adopt an asset-based community development approach which empowers residents and allows for community-led decision making in neighbourhoods, acknowledging that organic social capital building will vary by neighbourhood and adapt approaches accordingly	On target	The post covid working models, building on both the positive relationships across sectors, is being developed with ABCD at its core to ensure that residents are central to development and implementation of new ways of working.
Develop communications strategies which both amplify inspiring stories and create two-way conversations to inform council decision making	On target	Linked to the Citizen Participation work stream, varied guidance and tools to enable more two-way conversations are being tested and reviewed to help us better collaborate with residents.

74. This year has seen the role of neighbours and hyper-local community support become vital both in terms of providing support to the vulnerable and as a way to engage residents in their community and make them feel safe and connected. The development of community participation and communications strategies are critical for empowering residents allowing for community-led decision making.

75. Due to another lockdown and continuing community needs that need to be prioritised, work on the strategies has been delayed slightly but is progressing well. Established networks within the VCSE sector will continue to be an important resource in helping to meet community need and provide important avenues of communication with communities of interest.

76. Covid-19 has highlighted how important being connected is, and new groups are still coming forward. The recommendations from the developing strategies will provide the framework in which to harness this much needed social capital.

77. The council is engaged with wider sector community participation thinking which seeks to look for new, community-based solutions to some of our society's biggest challenges, from the economy, employment, training and skills to ordinary people creating healthier communities.

78. The council has continued to support delivery of the VCSE-led Norwich Food Poverty Action Plan, working with members of the Food Network in the city, including to adapt the plan in response to Covid-19. We allocated £10,000 to support food provision for families over the October half term, with some unspent funding to be used to support provision over the Christmas holidays.
79. We have also been supporting the range of organisations in the partnership to deliver other projects within the plan, by supporting initial discussions around a proposal for a social supermarket.
80. The council also continues to provide funding to the Financial Inclusion Consortium to support people in financial difficulty, including as a result of Covid-19. More widely we have been flexible with organisations receiving grant funding to allow them to use the money in the way they see best in response to Covid-19.

Conclusion

81. Despite the challenges brought about by Covid-19 the council has achieved a great deal since the Covid-19 Recovery Blueprint was agreed. Through the efforts and hard work of officers across the organisation, the council is pushing forward with its ambitious agenda to transform the city while responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and maintaining access to the essential services residents and businesses need.

Vision COVID-19 recovery group

82. Representatives from following groups and organisations act as the steering group during the City Vision COVID-19 recovery phase:

- Cultural Compact Board
- Financial Industries Group
- Good Economy Commission
- Healthy Norwich
- MAP & Norwich Youth Advisory Board
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- NHS Norfolk & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group
- Norfolk Chambers of Commerce
- Norfolk County Council – Public Health
- Norfolk Equality and Human Rights Group
- Norfolk Housing Alliance
- Norwich 2040 Local Cultural Education Partnership
- Norwich Business Improvement District (BID)
- Norwich Business Leaders Climate Group
- Norwich Cathedral and other faith representatives
- Norwich City College
- Norwich City Council
- Norwich City Football Club
- Norwich Opportunity Area
- Norwich University of the Arts
- Town Deals Board
- Transport representative TBD
- University of East Anglia
- VCSE Leadership Group

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	16 December 2020
Chief Executive:	Stephen Evans
Report subject:	COVID-19 recovery plan progress report
Date assessed:	8 December 2020

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment
Positive
Negative
Neutral
The elements are marked neutral above as this report covers the full range of activity of the council and it is impossible to identify the full range of impacts, therefore impact assessments should be completed for individual projects and decisions that follow from this document.
Issues