

Report to: Scrutiny and Overview Committee

20 July 2021

Lead Cabinet Member: Cllr Bridget Smith (Leader)

Lead Officer: Chief Operating Officer

Draft Re-set and Recovery Plan

Executive Summary

1. The Re-set and Recovery Plan outlines the key areas the Council will prioritise in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2021-23.
2. It is a Plan focused on practical recovery and seeks to identify a small number of critical activities or changes to ways of working, that can help our communities and businesses recover from the impact of the pandemic.
3. The document is intended to complement the activities and priorities within the Business Plan (21/22) and the Medium-Term Financial Plan. It therefore does not focus on activities already being undertaken within those documents or delivered as business as usual. There are currently a few actions included that may extend or expand recently introduced initiatives, such as an action to support those at risk of homelessness.
4. It is recognised that the plan is being written at a certain point in time, and that many of the impacts of the pandemic will continue to be seen over future months. The Plan has been drafted with the recognition that the implications from the virus, multiple national lockdowns and changes to Government Policy, will continue to be far-reaching and will require on-going dedicated resource from the Council throughout 2021.
5. The document submitted to Scrutiny is a developing draft. It is not the final version of the Plan, and it is expected that this document will continue to be refined over the Summer.

Key Decision

6. No

Recommendations

7. Scrutiny and Overview Committee is invited to:
 - (a) Consider the draft Re-set and Recovery Plan and recommend to Cabinet any additional issues, or changes, to ensure the document best responds to the

challenges faced by South Cambridgeshire residents, communities and businesses as a result of the pandemic.

Reasons for Recommendations

8. It is important that the Re-set and Recovery Plan for South Cambridgeshire reflects the specific actions and partnership working that will make the most difference, in supporting those acutely impacted by the pandemic and helping our communities and businesses to recover.

Details

9. In drafting this Strategy, we have considered the impacts of the pandemic on South Cambridge residents, communities and businesses. We want to focus on specific actions, or changes to ways of working, that can best support them through the next two years and through the immediate impacts of multiple lockdowns and the economic and societal shocks the last 18 months has brought.
10. This is a plan focused on practical recovery and establishing new initiatives to take us forward. It is intended to be read alongside the Council's Business Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan, and therefore does not duplicate actions already referenced in these plans or any Business as Usual activities.
11. The plan challenges the Council to consider how we want to work with, and support others, post-pandemic. Partnership working and helping our community groups to re-set and rebuild, at a point where people feel very tired is incredibly important.
12. To deliver the actions within this plan, sometimes the Council will be a deliverer of services; sometimes an enabler for other groups to deliver activities; and working in partnership, an influencer. This will require us to think carefully about how we use our resources and shape our engagement with others.

Implications

13. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-
 - Multiple lockdowns have had wide reaching impacts on our communities, businesses and vulnerable individuals. Resource will be required throughout 2021 to ensure that as the national vaccination programme is rolled out, support continues to be provided to those who need it. This may have implications for some of the timescales within the plan but it is not possible to say at this time what may be affected. The plan has been written based on the information we have at this point in time.
 - The implications of multiple lockdowns and national restrictions have disproportionately affected some people in our communities more than others. This Plan seeks to support these individuals and groups in particular.

- Changing our ways of working may have implications for staff and our partnership arrangements. Discussions are at the very early stages and this will be considered as the Plan develops. Staff and partners have repeatedly said they do not want to lose some of the ways of working we have introduced throughout the pandemic.
- Many people are very tired, and recently volunteer numbers across the County have been reducing. Through the Plan, we want to work closely with our communities to support their recovery and ensure that they can continue to tell us where we should focus our collective efforts.

Financial

14. The current actions within the plan can be funded from money available for the Council's COVID-19 response and recovery activities. Any changes or additions to the action plan will need to be considered from a financial and resourcing perspective.

Legal

15. None.

Staffing

16. As part of the draft action plan development process, resourcing has been considered to ensure deliverability of the priorities.
17. There will continue to be demands upon our staffing resources from COVID-19 related activities throughout 2021.

Risks/Opportunities

18. In developing the Re-set and Recovery Plan, the Council has the opportunity to reflect on lessons learned with our partners, throughout the pandemic. There is still much that is uncertain with regards to the coming months, but the Plan highlights those areas where the Council has an opportunity to support those who have been, and likely will continue to be, acutely impacted by the effects of the virus and multiple lockdowns.

Equality and Diversity

19. The action plan reaffirms the Council's commitment to be a responsible employer of choice, leading by example through recruitment and education and training programmes. The Plan also seeks to identify those most impacted by the pandemic, who are often those most vulnerable to economic or societal shocks more generally and continue to target support to them in the most effective way.

Climate Change

20. The pandemic has highlighted one of the four key priority areas within the Business Plan, 'Green to Our Core'. We have been reminded of the need to underpin resilient sustainable communities and economic interventions with a Green recovery. The priority

within the Business Plan 2021-22 makes sure that the environment and environmental impacts remain at the centre of all the work we do on recovery.

Health and Wellbeing

21. The pandemic has reminded us all of the importance of health, and healthy lifestyles. The Action Plan includes a range of actions aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of the residents and businesses in the district.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

18. This draft Plan is in line with the overarching themes and clear priorities within the Council Business Plan 2021-22.

Background Papers

None.

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Re-set and Recovery Plan

Report Author:

Anne Ainsworth – Chief Operating Officer
Telephone: 01954 712920