

Report To:	COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY SCRUTINY PANEL	Date:	5 NOVEMBER 2020
Heading:	BUSINESS RECOVERY AND SUPPORT		
Portfolio Holder:	NOT APPLICABLE		
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject to Call-In:	NO		

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present Members with an update regarding the recommendations that were formulated at the previous meeting of the Panel and presented to the 13 October meeting of Cabinet. This report will also provide Members with information requested at the previous meeting of the Panel relating to the Council's recently established Business Support Hub.

Recommendation(s)

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Scrutiny Panel Members are recommended to:

- a. Note the information contained in this report, including further details regarding the work of the Business Support Hub.
- b. Consider the challenges and impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has placed upon businesses in Ashfield, alongside the Council's established and future support measures to mitigate this.
- c. Consider any comments and/or recommendations to be presented to Cabinet at the scheduled 1 December meeting.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

At the previous meeting of the Panel, Members approved a set of recommendations to be presented to Cabinet and wished to receive a subsequent update on the discussions held at Cabinet regarding the recommendations.

Alternative Options Considered

No alternative options have been considered at this stage.

Detailed Information

CABINET – 13 OCTOBER 2020

As Members will be aware, a set of seven recommendations were discussed and approved by the Panel at the previous meeting held on 6 October 2020. The recommendations were as follows:

- The draft Economic Recovery Plan be approved with the proviso that the Plan is updated accordingly as circumstances change
- Work be undertaken to consider establishing a scheme to recognise local businesses that have excelled at adapting to guidelines and providing a COVID-secure environment for customers, in conjunction with key partners such as Discover Ashfield
- The Council continues working towards the establishment of a Key Workers Memorial, including consultation with Ashfield residents and key partners.
- The Council's established Business Support Hub offers support for those looking to set up new businesses or reinvent existing businesses as a result of the pandemic
- Cabinet be commended for the decision to implement 2 hour free parking in all town centre car parks to aid the longer-term recovery of Ashfield's local economy
- Congratulations be extended to the Planning and Economic Development Team, the Environmental Health Team, and the Discover Ashfield Board for their continued efforts to ensure that local businesses sufficiently adapt to COVID-19 measures and survive the ongoing economic difficulties brought about by the pandemic
- The Council explores all options to use the ring-fenced 'reopening High Streets' Fund' innovatively

The Panel's Chair and Vice Chair attended the meeting and presented the recommendations to Cabinet for their consideration and approval. Following discussions, Cabinet voted unanimously to approve all of the recommendations presented. The Chair and Vice Chair will continue to provide updates on the work of the Panel to Cabinet alongside any recommendations formulated.

PANEL MEETING – 6 OCTOBER

The previous meeting of the Panel was attended by the Council's Senior Economic Development Officer who discussed the work of the established Business Support Hub with Members. As part of these discussions, Members agreed that it would be useful to receive further information regarding the work of the Business Support Hub.

The Senior Economic Development Officer has provided further information for the Panel's consideration. This information is appended to this report as Appendix A. This includes details on the objectives, approach, present situation and work currently in progress, along with a journey map of the Business Support Hub service.

PANEL MEETING – 5 NOVEMBER

Continuing with the previously identified key area of focus of business recovery and support, invitations have been extended to various business representatives in Ashfield from a variety of

sectors, as requested by Members. Discussions with these representatives will aid the Panel's understanding of the challenges businesses continue to face throughout the pandemic, especially as restrictions become stricter across the area. These discussions will also provide a clearer picture of the most appropriate support for the Council to offer going forward.

At the 6 October meeting, Members agreed that an invitation should be extended to Jonathan Gribbin, the Director of Public Health for Nottinghamshire, to attend the 5 November meeting of the Panel to advise Members in relation to the development of the county-wide response to the pandemic and subsequent recovery plans.

Unfortunately, Jonathan Gribben was unable to confirm his attendance for the 5 November meeting due to other diary requirements. Involvement will be sought from the Director of Public Health for Nottinghamshire at a future meeting of the Panel.

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The Panel will be reviewing the Council's response and recovery plans in line with the refreshed Corporate Plan.

Legal:

There are no direct legal implications resulting from this report.

Finance:

There are no direct financial implications resulting from this report. Members have considered information relating to the financial support offered to businesses throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None.
General Fund – Capital Programme	
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	

Risk:

Risk	Mitigation
The Council's Corporate Risk Register has been reviewed to take account of impacts and increased risks as a result of COVID-19.	Monitoring and updating the COVID-19 related risks through the Council's existing Corporate Risk Management processes and through the work of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Scrutiny Panel.

Human Resources:

There are no direct HR implications resulting from this report. Any HR implications identified will be considered appropriately.

Environmental/Sustainability:

There are no direct environment or sustainability implications resulting from this report. Any environment or sustainability implications identified will be considered appropriately.

Equalities:

There are no direct equalities implications resulting from this report. Any equalities implications identified will be considered appropriately.

Other Implications:

None.

Reason(s) for Urgency

None.

Reason(s) for Exemption

None.

Background Papers

None.

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