

REPORT TO: CABINET

DATE: 10 SEPTEMBER 2020

TITLE: REPORT OF THE COVID-19 RECOVERY WORKING GROUP

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR EUGENIE HARVEY, DEPUTY LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

LEAD OFFICER: BRIAN KEANE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE (01279) 446004

This is not a Key Decision
It is on the Forward Plan as Decision Number I011722
Call-In Procedures may apply
This decision will affect no ward specifically

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- A** Approves the Covid-19 Recovery Working Group's final Terms of Reference (attached as Appendix A to the report).
- B** Agrees the Vision Statement and Corporate Themes, and Action Plan (attached as appendices B and C to the report).
- C** Recommends to Full Council that a further Corporate Priority of 'Resilience and Recovery' is introduced into an amended Corporate Plan with the associated Action Plan.

REASON FOR DECISION

- A** The Council has taken steps to respond, and begin the process of social and economic recovery of Harlow as the country continues to deal the Covid-19 pandemic. It has established a Working Group to work with Officers on a recovery action plan. This report brings forward proposals for the action plan.
- B** The report also recommends the adoption of the terms of reference for the Working Group and a vision of the recovery of Harlow.

BACKGROUND

1. The Working Group has met on three occasions since the last Cabinet meeting. Since that meeting the Portfolio Holder and Officers have continued to take actions on recovery within the four agreed workstreams. An update on those

actions was provided at the Working Group meeting on 5 August and is included as Appendix D to this report. This details the focus of the groups and a number of immediate measures that workstreams have implemented.

ISSUES/PROPOSALS

Terms of Reference

2. At its second meeting on 5 August, the Working Group considered and approved its terms of reference (attached as Appendix A to the report). They set out the overview of the ongoing recovery action plan and the proposed focus of:
 - a) Developing greater community resilience;
 - b) Educating the public about health risks and working to mitigate future outbreaks; and
 - c) Advancing the post-COVID local economy.

Vision Statement

3. The Working Group, at its meeting on 25 August, agreed the Vision Statement and Corporate Themes (attached as Appendix B to the report) which are brought to this meeting for approval. The proposed Vision is as follows:
 - a) “To harness the positive aspects of the community response to the Covid-19 crisis and address the negative outcomes such that the Harlow that emerges - its residents, businesses and voluntary groups – is stronger, more resilient and poised to take full strategic advantage of the opportunities for growth and renewal.”
4. The Vision Statement is supported by the themes for recovery “promoting within everything that it does for the recovery of the town, the strategic priorities of its Corporate Plan”. This includes a new Strategic Priority: Recovery and Resilience which will require Full Council approval supported by the proposed Action Plan. The themes also include objectives for each of the workstreams which inform the actions within the Action Plan. Further work will be done to develop community communication messaging from the vision document.

Action Plan

5. The Working Group has also considered an Action Plan (attached as Appendix C to the report) to support the achievement of recovery. The Action Plan is split into actions for each of the four workstreams. This document will form the starting point for work through the workstreams, but will be a dynamic plan, kept under review by the Working Group, which will need to develop longer term sustainable actions informed by ongoing work..

6. All four documents form a central part of the Council's strategic framework in leading Harlow's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic
7. It is recommended that the final terms of reference, Vision Statement and Corporate Themes and draft Action Plan are approved. A suggested amendment to the Corporate Plan is recommended to Full Council for approval. The actions attributed to that additional priority will be those contained within the recovery plan.

IMPLICATIONS

Environment and Planning (Includes Sustainability)

As set out in the reports to the working group

Author: Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning

Finance (Includes ICT, and Property and Facilities)

As set out in the reports to the working group

Author: Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive

Housing

As set out in the reports to the working group

Author: Andrew Murray, Head of Housing

Community Wellbeing (Includes Equalities and Social Inclusion)

As set out in the reports to the working group

Author: Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing

Governance (Includes HR)

As set out in the reports to the working group, change to the Corporate Plan fall within the Policy Framework and are a matter for the Council to approve.

Author: Simon Hill, Head of Governance

Background Papers

Those included within reports to the Working Group

<http://moderngov.harlow.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=299>

Appendices

Appendix A – Terms of Reference for the Working Group

Appendix B – Vision and Themes for recovery

Appendix C – Current Action Plan for recovery

Appendix D – Update Circulated by the Chair of the Working Group on 23 July 2020 on Workstream Activities and Immediate Actions