

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD

RECOVERY SCRUTINY PANEL

Minutes of a meeting of the Recovery Scrutiny Panel held at the Remote - Virtual Meeting on 15 July 2020 at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillors K. Foreman, N. D. Harrison (Chair), S. Parnall, J. E. Philpott and S. T. Walsh

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Cllr N. Harrison was nominated as Chair of the Panel, proposed by Cllr S. Walsh and seconded by Cllr K. Foreman.

Cllr N. Harrison was elected Panel Chair.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R. Michalowski. Cllr S. Sinden sent her apologies due to technical issues.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel agreed the Terms of Reference, scope, focus and objectives for the meetings as set out in the Agenda pack.

4. INTRODUCTION TO RECOVERY

Cllr T. Schofield, Deputy Leader and Lead on the recovery work, gave an overview of the Covid-19 recovery. The Council was in transition out of lockdown and into strategic recovery and exploring opportunities to transform the organisation.

5. WORKSTREAM UPDATES: PROGRESS AND FUTURE FOCUS

Five recovery workstreams were meeting regularly with Lead Executive Members and relevant Heads of Service which was working well ensuring good communication. The five workstreams were: community connections, including supporting vulnerable residents; supporting local businesses and the local economy to recover, council services and project recovery, finances and income to fund future services and new ways of working and models of service delivery. The five workstreams report their recommendations into the Recovery Scrutiny Panel which was the decision-making body. The Panel is chaired by Cllr T. Schofield and members of this Panel included the Chief Executive, directors and the Leader as well as representatives from communications, finance and economic prosperity teams. The Steering Group meets weekly and tracks all recovery decisions in one place.

Cllr T. Schofield gave an update to Panel Members on the work of all five workstreams including the future focus of the work. Much of the work during the transition phase had looked at reintroducing services safely for residents. All

playgrounds and sports pitches could now take bookings. It was noted that the number of welfare calls to shielded people was gradually decreasing. The community support centre in the Harlequin was gradually winding down with food supplies to be stored elsewhere in the Borough. The Waller Cinema had reopened safely.

A presentation to the Panel updated Members on the breadth of the recovery work, such as support for the Borough's high streets and town centres, grant funding, waste and recycling services, parking and environmental health, business support and grant funding.

6. DISCUSSION AND QUESTIONS

Panel Members asked questions and discussed the following areas:

Budget – Members asked if a budget had been set for each of the workstreams, what were expected costs and what the Council expected to recover from central government funding. It was noted that no separate budgets had been set for workstreams, apart from the time and costs of officers involved. The Finance team was keeping track of all additional spending, so they were clear on the impact on this year's budget, and the Finance and Income workstream will ensure that where appropriate ongoing recovery costs are considered as part of service & financial planning. Where linked to the Covid response, the Council will seek reimbursement from Government. For example, the YMCA was being paid for the cost of their staff making welfare calls. This had been approved by the Incident Management Team (IMT) and was 'Covid-recoverable' from government funding. There would be regular reporting against budget on a quarterly basis and a report was going to the Executive on 28 July.

Redeployed staff – the Panel discussed cross dependencies across service areas, for example, where staff are redeployed in the emergency response and when they are returning to business as usual work.

Preparation for a potential second wave of Covid-19 – Members asked what would happen if there was a second wave of Coronavirus or a local lockdown. Members felt the Council's response had been impressive and asked if the current preparations and work had been documented. It was confirmed that this was being considered as the winding down of emergency services was being managed in a controlled way. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) was preparing a debrief and was gathering information from teams about what had happened and what had worked well. A working group from the LRF was specifically looking at a response to a local outbreak.

Community Centres – there was a programme for phased and safe reopening of community centres beginning with reopening to selected tenants and membership fees waived. They were not open for traditional community day centre activities but some of the tenants were operating from them such as Age Concern Banstead and a podiatrist and hairdresser in Woodhatch. This was in consultation with the health and safety advisor and Covid-19 safety checks.

Housing – the Borough was working to secure positive housing outcomes for single homeless people in emergency accommodation. There were 41 people in temporary accommodation, and most were single homeless people with complex

needs. The Council wanted to continue using the temporary units (currently in Donyngs car park). Staff were working to secure longer term accommodation and other support needed for those currently in temporary accommodation. It is expected that there could also be increased demand for homelessness services as a result of the ban on evictions being lifted and changes in personal circumstances, and the Housing Team are making plans to respond to this.

Survey of voluntary sector – Members asked for more information about results from a recent survey to inform the future relationship with the VCF sector and local communities/volunteers. There had been a huge increase in volunteering and the Council was feeding back what it had learned from working with the voluntary sector during the emergency response.

Cllr S. Parnall joined the meeting at 7.03pm.

Business guilds – Members asked if the Council was engaging with local business guilds. It was confirmed that the Economic Prosperity team was continuing to offer support to local businesses. For example, the Council was actively engaged with Horley business traders.

Youth Hub – this was an initiative with Tandridge District Council and the Department for Work and Pensions to establish a Youth Hub to support young people to access employment, work experience and training/skills development. Whilst it was noted work was still underway to develop proposals, the Panel asked more information about resourcing for this work when it becomes available.

Project prioritisation – Members asked about the criteria for prioritising projects that had been paused and which were most critical. The majority of current projects were in the Place directorate such as developments at Pitwood Park, Cromwell Road and Marketfield Way and many had been able to continue throughout the crisis. It was confirmed that prioritisation related to a number of categories such as whether it was a Corporate Plan priority, legal or contractual considerations, revenue stream considerations, health and safety considerations. A recovery overview report tracked progress and dates in the different workstreams. Members asked if the Panel could be informed about which decisions had been added, changed or removed.

Coast to Capital and the LEP – the Panel was told that the Council had bid for additional LEP funding for the Marketfield Way development project in Redhill from government funding called 'Getting Building Fund' to help regenerate growth.

Leisure centres – there were ongoing discussions with Greenwich Leisure about reopening the three leisure centres in the Borough.

Financial impact of Covid-19 – the Finance team was monitoring commercial property and revenue income collection. The Executive paper on 25 June contained an annex which set out the latest current estimate of the impact of the pandemic. Lost rental income was forecast to be around £300k. The Council was taking a proactive approach to agree payment plans rather than payment holidays. It was looking to recover delayed council tax payments and non-domestic rates income later in the year. The costs for responding to Covid-19 were due to be repaid by central government. Over the short term the Council has sufficient contingency to

accommodate the forecast costs. The updated Medium-Term Financial Plan will consider longer term legacy impacts.

Commercial revenues – Members asked about plans that had been in place to increase commercial revenues this year to meet future needs. The Commercial Ventures Executive Sub-Committee was looking at this issue. It was confirmed that for the purposes of budgeting this year, it was not expected that there would be additional revenue from this source.

Revenue collection – the Panel asked if there was a sensitive approach to debt recovery of council tax where people were furloughed or made redundant and were struggling financially. It was confirmed that relatively few residents had asked for a payment deferral and a smaller number had cancelled their council tax direct debits. There were individual discussions about repayment plans with residents on what they could afford and over what period.

Cemetery provisions – Members asked how cemetery services had been affected during the pandemic response. Some non-essential cemetery services had been paused so staff could focus on continued safe and sensitive delivery of core services. The work and arrangements had been manageable. The Council also has in place arrangements for mutual aid from other local authorities, if required in future, which put it in a good place to respond to any future peaks in coronavirus.

Measuring recovery – Members asked how the recovery of services was being measured. It was confirmed that as services were getting back on stream the Council would use the KPIs and service level indicators that are in place to measure these targets. These would be monitored carefully and reviewed for future years if unanticipated trends were emerging and to reflect any new ways of working.

Communication with Members – The Leader's briefing to Members was welcomed and was continuing fortnightly. It was suggested that relevant Portfolio Holders could attend the Leader's fortnightly briefing. Members could ask to focus on specific workstreams for more detailed discussions in one area at the next Panel meeting should they wish. Panel Members would be updated in the interim with Recovery Overview summary updates.

A Member survey was planned to ask Members about their experiences of working remotely since March. It was noted that some Members had a poor service from their broadband provider/Wi-Fi and connectivity would be explored through the survey. ICT were providing support to those Members.

New ways of working – Members discussed hybrid working arrangements for the work of Committees and Council groups – working from home and from the Town Hall and how this may work in practice.

7. NEXT STEPS

It was agreed that an update from the Panel's meeting would be given at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Thursday 10 September. The next meeting of the Panel is Thursday 15 October.

The Meeting closed at 8.00 pm

COVID-19 Recovery

Recovery Scrutiny Panel
July 2020



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Introduction to RBBC recovery work

“The recovery of council services and activities in light of changes in the ways we all live, work and move about for the foreseeable future”

Our five recovery workstreams



Community connections, including supporting vulnerable residents



Supporting local businesses and the local economy to recover



Council services and project recovery



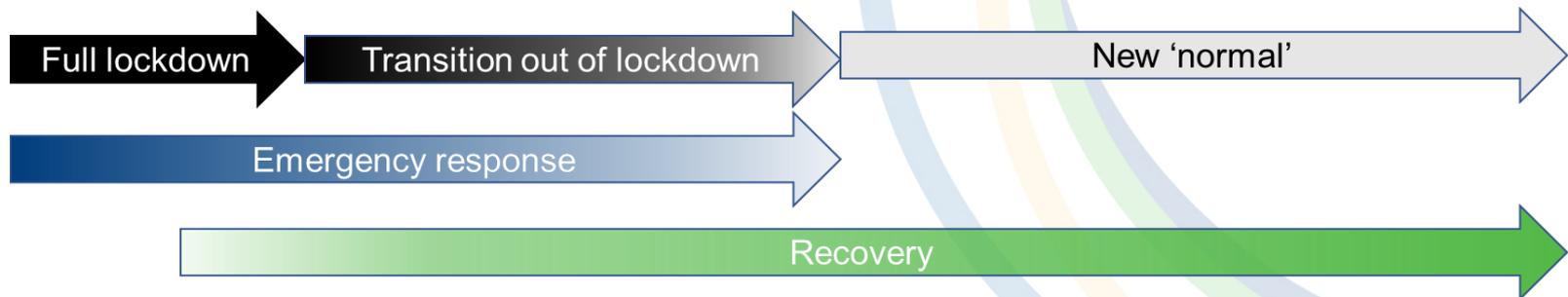
Finances and income to fund future services



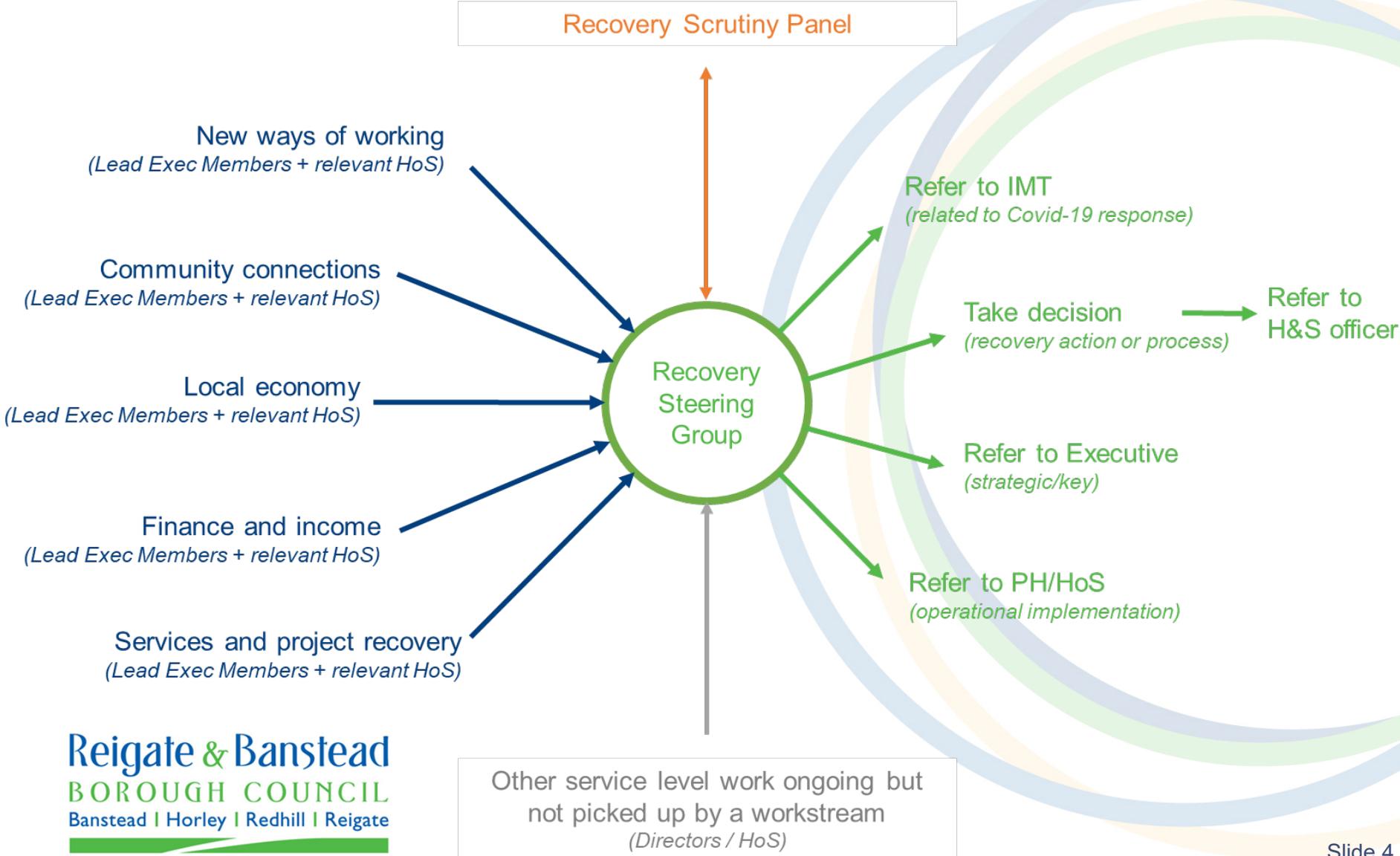
New ways of working and models of service delivery

Timescales

- **Transition:** supporting gradual transition out of lockdown for residents and ensuring vital services are provided safely (=> July and ongoing)
- **Strategic recovery:** returning the wider range of council services to a more normal footing (=> end of the year)
- **Transformation:** changing how we deliver services in light of the experiences of recent months (=> 2021/22 service & financial planning and beyond)



Working arrangements



Workstream updates



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Community Connections: Progress to date

Harlequin

- Gradual winding down of community support centre operations (ensuring resilience for continuing needs and in event of future spike) and provide ongoing support for foodbanks
- Safe reopening of Waller Cinema, and activities to maintain profile of Harlequin Theatre including 'Live from Lockdown'

Community centres

- Programme for phased and safe reopening of community centres beginning with reopening to selected tenants
- Membership fees waived

Family Support

- Recommence full range of support incorporating Covid-safe ways of working

Community Development and Partnerships

- Gradual winding down of welfare / shielded calls
- Borough-wide locality meetings to facilitate and cement relationships with community partners
- Keep up to date mapping of support services to inform residents

Housing

- Work to secure positive housing outcomes for single homeless people in emergency accommodation

Community Connections: Phase 2 focus

Harlequin

- Develop plans for return of Harlequin as an arts and cultural venue

Community Centres

- Increase activities provided from September where safe to do so
- Explore options for virtual or outdoor activity provision
- Recommence work to develop a future vision for the centres

Leisure centres

- Work with GLL to develop plans for re-starting leisure provision

Community Development and Partnerships

- Use data/learning about vulnerable people to develop plans for future support
- Consider results of recent survey and determine future relationship with VCF sector and local communities/volunteers generally

Family Support

- Recommence full range of support incorporating Covid-safe ways of working

Housing

- Managing increased demand for homelessness services as a result of lifting of ban on evictions and changes in personal circumstances

Local businesses and economy: Progress to date

High Streets

- ‘Shop Safe Shop Local’ branding – signage, social media and support for business owners
- Town centres, and due to be rolled out to local centres on a smaller scale

Grant funding

- Promotion to encourage uptake of small business grants and retail/leisure/hospitality grants schemes, and development and promotion of local discretionary business grants scheme

Business support

- Use of existing channels to provide support and information to businesses
- Virtual meetings with business leaders and with local businesses to understand support needs
- Business champions social media campaign promoting local businesses going ‘the extra mile’

Local businesses and economy: Phase 2 focus

“Live Local Work Local”

- Refocused project to provide careers guidance to students and promote local employers and job opportunities

Youth Hub

- Working with Tandridge DC and Dept for Work & Pensions to establish a Youth Hub to support young people to access employment, work experience and training/skills development

Business support

- Recommence virtual ‘Learning Lunch’ webinars
- Explore opportunities for the reintroduction of start-up business workshops

Business Barometer

- Bringing together key economic statistics and business intelligence to help monitor business impact and recovery

Services and projects recovery: Progress to date

Overview

- Mapping of on-hold or delayed activities and projects; prioritise and coordinate recommencement taking account of staff availability, health and safety etc

Waste & recycling

- Plan and implement re-start of green waste service and registrations

Greenspaces

- Plan and implement re-opening play of areas, skateparks, multi-use games areas etc, licensing for Covid-safe activities in parks and sports pitch bookings
- Plan and implement re-start of non-essential verge maintenance activities

Parking and environmental health

- Plan and implement re-start of single yellow line parking enforcement and town centre car park charging
- Plan and implement re-start of proactive food premises inspections

Sustainability and climate change

- Progress Strategy adoption and recruitment

Services and projects recovery: Phase 2 focus

Overview

- Continue to monitor service and project delivery and advise on Covid-recovery related issues
- Provide advice and oversight about service & project recovery issues in event of a second spike in Covid locally or nationally

RBBC RECOVERY OVERVIEW

15 July 2020

Workstream: Services - Summary of Activities	Target/Completion Dates	Status
Local Business and Economy		
To grant outline approval to assume Lead Accountable Body responsibility on a partnership project	Wed 30/09/20	Future Task
To install signage in the borough's local shopping parades	Fri 31/07/20	Progressing
Town Centre Christmas Lights funding discussions	Mon 30/11/20	Progressing
Community Connections and Vulnerable People		
Welfare, Food and Pharmacy Support		
Cease to provide Emergency Food Packs other than to shielded residents	Fri 31/07/20	Progressing
Move food storage from Harlequin to an alternate property	Fri 31/07/20	Progressing
Transition from operational support back to the strategic oversight of foodbanks	Fri 31/07/20	Progressing
Cease Pharmacy delivery service support: offer support to develop their own in-house volunteer programmes	Fri 31/07/20	Progressing
Community Centres		
Virtual provision options	Mon 10/08/20	On Schedule
Outdoor centre provision options	Mon 10/08/20	On Schedule
Proceed with engagement to shape future of centres	Sun 31/01/21	On Schedule
Family Support		
Outdoor face-to-face contact	Wed 15/07/20	Progressing
Reopening of Waller Studio		
Modifying the venue	Mon 06/07/20	Progressing
Source for PPE	Mon 06/07/20	Progressing
Cinema opened	Fri 17/07/20	On Schedule
New Arts Projects		
Submission open	Wed 22/07/20	Future Task
Public voting	Wed 05/08/20	Future Task

Example of project tracking summary

Finance and income: Progress to date

Financial impact of Covid

- Ongoing operational activity to record, monitor and forecast impact
- Overview report to June Executive and MTFP to July Executive
- Covid impact to be reported through usual quarterly reporting process

Commercial property income streams

- Oversight of impact on commercial property income streams
- Proactive approach to agree payment plans rather than payment holidays

Revenues collection

- Oversight of impact on revenue collection
- Approach to payment plans/deferrals and recommencement of collection activity

Covid impact on commercial activities

- Review of current market yields against property portfolio to inform commercial approach

Finance and income: Phase 2 focus

Service & Financial planning

- Ensure financial implications of recovery workstreams is incorporated into service and financial planning

Income

- Continue to monitor commercial property and revenue income collection and advise on collection interventions.

Financial and commercial implications of the 'new normal'

- Continue to advise on approach to address financial and commercial implications associated with macro-economic circumstances
- Input Covid recovery considerations into wider commercial ventures work
- Consider financial and commercial opportunities associated with potential new ways of working

New ways of working: Progress to date

- Identification of the New Ways of Working that we should seek to achieve, and tools available to the Council to achieve these (*note that the below is work in progress and will continue to be refined*)

What is the 'New Way of Working'?	What is the outcome we are aiming for?
Services are designed and delivered taking into account users' needs, data and insight, communications, and environmental and social impacts	Service delivery is effective and adaptive to local needs and the positive reputation of the Council for delivering services is enhanced.
An organisational culture that is clearly articulated and embraced	Staff satisfaction and the positive reputation of the Council as a place to work is enhanced.
Measures in place to allow staff and members to use technology and other tools to work effectively	Staff and members are supported to work in an efficient and effective way, with a better work-life balance
Better use of technology/digital for committee meetings; clearer consideration and recording of the environmental and social impact of the decisions we make	Formal council decision-making is transacted in a more inclusive and transparent way
Running our operations in a more environmentally-friendly way and monitoring / reporting on this	The Council's environmental footprint (including from operational resource use, emissions and business-related travel) is reduced
Take a more active role in supporting local businesses and town and local centres to build relationships with their local communities	Local businesses and our high streets benefit from stronger local support
Build on our stronger relationships with partner organisations and the VCF sector to focus on the quality of 'people' services delivered, not who delivers them	Holistic, wrap-around support for our most vulnerable people
Greater understanding and transparency about the relationship between our costs and income to ensure sound financial decision making	Council generates efficiency savings/income as a result of the above or other opportunities

New ways of working: Progress cont and phase 2 focus

Evidence gathering

- Staff survey; member survey; ongoing work to review other third party data

Options Assessment and proposal development, eg...

- Technology and digital solutions
- Facilities solutions (eg Town Hall)
- OD strategy (=> Employment committee)
- Service user engagement and contact methods
- Legal and financial considerations and implications

Feeding into future policy/strategy development and budget setting



Questions and discussion

- Overall structure and scope
- Progress and future focus

