

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 5 August 2020)

1. RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS – COVID-19 – UPDATE (MINUTE NO 105)

The Cabinet can report that the Council's Health and Leisure Centres began their re-opening on a phased basis from Monday 3 August 2020 and the huge efforts from both Members and Officers towards this should be recognised.

The Prime Minister's Announcement at the end of July of a pause in lockdown measures being eased, should be a reminder to all of the need to be vigilant of the changes needed to everyone's lifestyles.

Plans continue to carefully enable more Council staff to return to Appletree Court offices, whilst the Council's new website and telephone system have both gone live in July and August respectively.

2. COVID-19 RECOVERY – REPORT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (MINUTE NO 106)

The Cabinet would like to thank the work of the internal COVID-19 Recovery Task and Finish Groups in bringing forward a range of recommendations from June to September, which have formed the basis of the Council's approach to recovery and the formulation of the new budget proposals for 2020/21. Whilst some of the external impact assessment work with both the local economy and the voluntary sector will continue into the Autumn, it is anticipated that much of the internal recovery work will now be picked up through the course of the normal work planning of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

In respect of Operations, following the recommendations of the COVID-19 RECOVERY – Council Services Task and Finish Group, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services has asked officers to work on financial mitigation measures, including a specific review of public conveniences and regular reviews on the number of hired vehicles.

3. COVID-19 RECOVERY – COUNCIL SERVICES - HOMELESSNESS (MINUTE NO 107)

The Cabinet, having considered the recommendations from the COVID-19 RECOVERY – Council Services Task and Finish Group, approved a list of actions in supporting the Council's responsibilities to provide a homelessness service and to intervene in the early stages to prevent homelessness. Through the good work already undertaken by the Council to adopt a Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2019, the Council was and remains well placed to cope with the challenges presented by circumstances such as COVID-19.

The actions approved include continuing to accommodate those vulnerable people already placed into emergency accommodation during COVID-19, exploring more options to resolve homelessness and bringing on board existing projects to create further Council owned temporary accommodation and further units.

The Cabinet can confirm that discussions will continue with Government over any available funding but regardless, the Council remains committed to delivering these vital services.

4. COVID-19 RECOVERY – FINANCE & RESOURECES (MINUTE NO 108)

The Cabinet, having considered the recommendations from the COVID-19 RECOVERY – Finance and Resources Task and Finish Group, approved a range of actions in support of the development of the Council’s Emergency Budget.

Whilst the efforts to deliver a fully funded revised budget for 2020/21 were excellent, it would remain a challenge to revise the Medium Term Financial Plan in the context of the future financial pressures placed on the Council. Despite this, the Cabinet considers that the Council is well placed to meet the challenge.

5. VISION FOR THE WATERSIDE (MINUTE NO 109)

The Cabinet endorsed the proposed approach to the consideration of the Vision for the Waterside document, a draft overall strategy which would deal with the aspirations for the Waterside, rather than a comprehensive set of detailed plans for the area which would follow in future relevant documents.

The Cabinet look forward to hearing the views of councillors and Town and Parish Councils at the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on 13 August 2020, which will inform the next stages of the process.

6. ENJOY SUMMER SAFELY CAMPAIGN (MINUTE NO 110)

The Cabinet can report that “Enjoy Summer Safely England” had been oversubscribed with £7.7m in bids received against an available award of £3.1m. Consequently, this meant that with some disappointment, the Go New Forest Bid had been unsuccessful, although it was considered to be a good bid.

Despite this set back, the Visit Hampshire bid which promoted the whole of Hampshire through the campaign, including the New Forest, was successful. The focus of the Visit Hampshire bid will include driving demand to a broad range of visitor attractions, accommodation, retail and hospitality, and outdoor activity providers across the county.

New Forest attractions and countryside will feature prominently in the Visit Hampshire campaign media (Print, Digital, Social & Out of Home) and it is anticipated that the local hospitality businesses will benefit from this award.

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**