

Agenda

Cabinet

Thursday, 25 June 2020, 10.00 am
Online only

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic Worcestershire County Council will be holding this meeting in accordance with the relevant legislative arrangements for remote meetings of a local authority. For more information please refer to: Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

Please note that this is a public meeting, conducting remotely by videoconferencing between invited participants and live streamed for general access via a link on the Council's website to the Council's You Tube Channel.

The Agenda papers and background papers can be accessed electronically on the Council's website. Members of the public and press are permitted to report on the proceedings.

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as Large Print, an audio recording or Braille; it can also be emailed as a Microsoft Word attachment. Please contact Democratic Services on telephone number 01905 843579 or by emailing democraticservices@worcestershire.gov.uk

DISCLOSING INTERESTS

There are now 2 types of interests:
'Disclosable pecuniary interests' and **'other disclosable interests'**

WHAT IS A 'DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST' (DPI)?

- Any **employment**, office, trade or vocation carried on for profit or gain
- **Sponsorship** by a 3rd party of your member or election expenses
- Any **contract** for goods, services or works between the Council and you, a firm where you are a partner/director, or company in which you hold shares
- Interests in **land** in Worcestershire (including licence to occupy for a month or longer)
- **Shares** etc (with either a total nominal value above £25,000 or 1% of the total issued share capital) in companies with a place of business or land in Worcestershire.

NB Your DPIs include the interests of your spouse/partner as well as you

WHAT MUST I DO WITH A DPI?

- **Register** it within 28 days and
- **Declare** it where you have a DPI in a matter at a particular meeting
 - you must **not participate** and you **must withdraw**.

NB It is a criminal offence to participate in matters in which you have a DPI

WHAT ABOUT 'OTHER DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS'?

- No need to register them but
- You must **declare** them at a particular meeting where:
You/your family/person or body with whom you are associated have a **pecuniary interest** in or **close connection** with the matter under discussion.

WHAT ABOUT MEMBERSHIP OF ANOTHER AUTHORITY OR PUBLIC BODY?

You will not normally even need to declare this as an interest. The only exception is where the conflict of interest is so significant it is seen as likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

DO I HAVE TO WITHDRAW IF I HAVE A DISCLOSABLE INTEREST WHICH ISN'T A DPI?

Not normally. You must withdraw only if it:

- affects your **pecuniary interests OR** relates to a **planning or regulatory** matter
- **AND** it is seen as likely to **prejudice your judgement** of the public interest.

DON'T FORGET

- If you have a disclosable interest at a meeting you must **disclose both its existence and nature** – 'as noted/recorded' is insufficient
- **Declarations must relate to specific business** on the agenda
 - General scattergun declarations are not needed and achieve little
- Breaches of most of the **DPI provisions** are now **criminal offences** which may be referred to the police which can on conviction by a court lead to fines up to £5,000 and disqualification up to 5 years
- Formal **dispensation** in respect of interests can be sought in appropriate cases.

Cabinet

Thursday, 25 June 2020, 10.00 am, Online only

Membership: Mr S E Geraghty (Chairman), Mr A T Amos, Mr A I Hardman, Mr M J Hart, Mrs L C Hodgson, Ms K J May, Mr A P Miller, Dr K A Pollock, Mr A C Roberts and Mr J H Smith

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page No
1	Apologies and Declarations of Interest	
2	Public Participation Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in writing or by e-mail indicating both the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case Wednesday 24 June 2020). Further details are available on the Council's website. Enquiries can also be made through the telephone number/e-mail address listed below.	
3	Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting The Minutes of the meeting of 4 June 2020 have been previously circulated.	
4	Covid-19 Response and Restart Update	1 - 24
5	Covid-19 Economic Restart Plan	25 - 30
6	Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring - Financial Outturn	31 - 42
7	Review of Delivery Model for Medical Education Provision	43 - 50
8	Scrutiny Report - Care Work as a Career	51 - 52

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To obtain further information or a copy of this agenda contact Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager on Worcester (01905) 846011 or email: sjones19@worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website.

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CABINET
25 JUNE 2020**COVID-19 RESPONSE & RESTART UPDATE**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr S E Geraghty

Relevant Chief Officer

Chief Executive

Recommendation

1. **The Leader and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) **Notes and endorses the action taken by the Council in relation to Covid-19 restart planning to date;**
 - (b) **Notes the revenue expenditure incurred by the Council to date, receipt of further Government grant and that further updates will be presented to Cabinet in due course;**
 - (c) **Approves the setting up of a One Worcestershire central PPE store hub for care providers and charges to care providers at cost only, and any other costs claimed from Government.**
 - (d) **Uses the information in this report as the background for reporting to Council about the urgent decisions taken at the meeting of Cabinet on 26 March 2020.**

Background

2. Officers reported the Council's response to COVID19 to Cabinet earlier this month (4 June 2020 - [Link](#)). Our response included activating the Corporate Emergency Response Framework, setting up Council's own internal Gold, Silver and Bronze arrangements aligned to the LRF structures of Strategic (SCG) and Tactical (TCG) Co-ordinating Groups. The Mission of Gold being: "to preserve life, prevent the spread of infection and maintain critical Council services".
3. The Cabinet report set out in detail temporary changes to policies and working practices enacted to respond to the initial response to protect lives and prevent further spreading of infection. It also made reference to Records of Officer Executive Decisions in Appendix 2 of that report.

4. The following sections and paragraphs set out how the Council has been responding to COVID-19 since that first report and focuses on the initial recovery phase. A separate paper on the Council's Economic Recovery plans has been tabled on the same Cabinet agenda.

➤ **Safeguarding vulnerable adults**

- *Support for Care homes*
5. Worcestershire's COVID-19 Care Home Support Plan was published on 29th May 2020. This sets out how key partners across Adult Social Care, Worcestershire Public Health, Public Health England, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and other health partners are working together to support care homes. The support plan includes current and future plans for co-ordination of infection control measures, testing programmes, training, HR support, and co-ordination and distribution of PPE. Examples of specific areas of action include:
 - Development and issuing to providers of regularly updated health and infection control guidance, in the form of easy-to-use action cards.
 - Procurement, storage and distribution of PPE stock via an online request system providing either same day or next day delivery of emergency PPE free of charge.
 - Early availability of testing for symptomatic residents, with subsequent rollout of a local programme to enable large scale testing for all residents and staff in COVID-positive homes
 - Priority access to next-day testing for symptomatic and asymptomatic care home staff through the Worcestershire single point of contact led by Worcestershire County Council Human Resources department
 - Proactive roll-out of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) training offer to all homes
 - Roll-out of iPads to all care homes in Worcestershire, enabling online GP consultations and the use of technology to reduce social isolation
 - Proactive support for the mental health and wellbeing of care home managers and deputy managers
 6. The establishment of a Care Home Hub and daily "Huddle" meetings at an early stage of the COVID-19 outbreak has enabled a system-wide approach to be put in place and embedded with collective accountability from all partners across Worcestershire. Governance from the Care Home Hub through to Worcestershire's Silver and Gold Command ensures the system has oversight and confidence that actions are being implemented.
 7. Positive ongoing feedback obtained from care home providers evidences that this approach is helpful and valued. Impact of the actions taken is also evidenced in the data. We have seen a decline in the number of infections, outbreaks and deaths in care homes related to COVID-19.

8. The Care Home Support Plan will continue to be updated as we progress through the phases of the COVID-19 outbreak.

- *Support for other adult social care providers*

9. Planning for the recovery phase is also underway in relation to other commissioned adult social care provision. The new block contract which was commissioned with a home care agency is now fully operational and the future commissioning strategy for domiciliary care is being updated to ensure that current and future needs arising from COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 can continue to be met.

10. Discussions are taking place with externally commissioned day services in relation to a potential phased re-opening of services as national lockdown conditions are eased. While there is no current expectation that external day services should re-open, commissioners are working with providers on a service by service basis. Providers are being advised to carry out a thorough risk assessment for their service which will inform their decision-making. Individual risk assessments will also be needed, with social worker input, for adults and their families who may be considering a return to services.

11. Commissioners are also working with other services areas and partner organisations to review the next phase of the COVID-19 response, and considering how commissioned services need to be organised to respond to future changes to work patterns, for example the embedding of a “7-day working” pattern.

- *Meeting the Needs of Those in Receipt of Care and Support*

12. All operational teams reviewed all people currently in receipt of care and support funded by the Council within the first 3 weeks. This identified those people who were considered to be at higher risk of carer breakdown or other pressures due to the withdrawal of services by providers, the loss of community support, the restrictions imposed by ‘lockdown’ or by virtue of being in the ‘shielded’ cohort. Any person who was considered at high risk has been offered weekly ‘welfare check’ calls.

13. Where a person requires additional support or a change in the way it is delivered, this has been provided. In some cases, people and their families have declined to use services due to understandable concerns about the risk of Covid-19 infection. Again, support has been provided to enable this to happen in the best way possible under the circumstances, including providing alternative care arrangements. All arrangements will be reviewed at the declared end of the pandemic.

14. For self-funders in care homes whose capital has fallen below the £23,750 threshold, the Council has continued to fund their care home placement and has not followed the usual process where it explores where there is a better value placement available. This approach was adopted to: reduce the risk to people of transferring from care home to care home; to minimise the impact on the care home market; to reduce family anxiety caused by a potential care home move in

such challenging times. All these 'self-funding pickups' have been notified that these arrangements will be reviewed within 6 months.

- *Care Act Easements*

15. The Coronavirus Act 2020 allowed all Councils to apply 'easements' to the Care Act, which effectively permitted the Council to turn its duties under the Care Act into powers, so long as its actions remained compliant with Human Rights legislation. Advocacy and safeguarding duties were exempted. The guidance required the Council to take specific governance steps if it wished to apply easements.
16. To apply easements, the Council has to demonstrate that there has been either a significant impact on its workforce or a significant increase in demand, due to Covid-19. The Principal Social Worker has reported weekly to the designated Director of Adult Social Services on these. As neither of these scenarios have applied to Worcestershire County Council, no easements have been sought or applied and, based on current predictions, it is highly unlikely that any will be.

- *Safeguarding*

17. The Council has continued to respond to safeguarding concerns reported. Although referrals fluctuated during April and early May, there was no discernible pattern to reflect -a reluctance of people to refer. This included domestic abuse referrals. Some concerns were raised - due to people being in more restrictive arrangements as a result of providers implementing a blanket approach to social distancing. These have been addressed on a case by case basis and guidance issued to all providers.

- *Hospital Discharges*

18. The Government introduced new hospital discharge guidance on 19 March 2020. This was designed to create capacity in hospitals in advance of the anticipated demand from Covid-19 cases and to ensure that people were discharged rapidly and safely to maintain flow. The core of this approach was a 3 hour discharge 'window' from the point someone was medically determined as no longer requiring acute care to the point of discharge, and to shift fundamentally the focus to assessing post-hospital care and support needs after discharge and not whilst in hospital.
19. The Council with NHS partners enacted these changes. This included: operating a 7 day 8 am to 8 pm service in hospitals; seconding additional managers and staff from community teams; block purchasing care home beds; increasing the capacity of Pathway 1 (support at home). In addition, the Government suspended all CHC assessment processes. Locally, the NHS and Social Care system decided: Community Hospitals would no longer offer reablement and this would be provided at home; any person who was assessed on the Rockwood score as having severe frailty or above would be discharged direct to a Community Hospital, otherwise they would go home. Whilst these changes were dramatic to existing local discharge processes, it should be noted that they are wholly consistent with best discharge practice.

20. The Council also contracted with two local hotels (Cadmore Lodge in Tenbury and Stourport Manor) to provide safe accommodation for people who were discharged 'home' but unable to immediately do so due to infection risk to other household members. As the initial wave of cases has dropped this contract will end on 30 June. We have also contacted Stourport Manor to accommodate homeless people and we continue to review the need and use alongside our district colleagues.
 21. The impact of these changes has seen: a significant drop in the number of people at the end of each day who no longer need acute care but who are still in Acute Hospital (from approx. 50 pre-Covid to approx. 10 per day now); reduced length of stay in acute hospitals by 1.5 days on average; a significant reduction in length of stays exceeding 7 days (circa 50%); reduced average length of stay in Community Hospitals from 24 days to 14 days. However, it should be noted that demand never reached the levels predicted: approximately 50% of all hospital beds remained vacant even at the peak; the number of people discharged home with support remained at 12 per day whilst capacity was in place for 50 people to be supported; the proportion going home with no support was 85% compared to the national planning model of 50%.
 22. The Health and Care System, via the Service Improvement Board, is actively considering how to enable effective and safe discharges going forward, subject to revised national guidance.
- *Worcestershire's Outbreak Control Plans*
23. The NHS Test, Trace and Isolate (TTI) service was launched on 28th May 2020. A national contact tracing service aims to identify people who are contacts of people with a confirmed Covid 19 diagnosis and instruct them to self isolate at home for 14 days.
 24. As restrictions begin to ease, social distancing, good hand hygiene and a contact tracing system will help to limit the spread of infection, protect our health and social care system and enable some return to normal life.
 25. The national TTI system will identify local outbreaks of Covid 19 rapidly. Regional Public Health England will continue to respond to outbreaks, however, Local Authorities will have a role in providing local management in more complex situations, prevention of outbreaks across settings and practical support for people who are isolating.
 26. Every Upper Tier Local Authority in England is required to create a local Outbreak Plan, lead by the Director of Public Health (DPH), by the end of June and WCC will be allocated a share of £300m to fund these.

27. Plans should cover 7 themes set out nationally and can be locally developed and refined through a new local Covid 19 Health Protection Committee. This committee will go on to oversee management of outbreaks, ensure that appropriate resources and SOPs are in place for outbreak management and reflect on learning to identify improvements for future outbreak management.
28. A Member led 'Covid 19 Local Outbreak Engagement Board' will be developed as a subgroup of the existing Health and Wellbeing Board to provide effective public communication and democratic oversight of the management of outbreaks.
29. A communications and engagement plan will drive campaigns around prevention, testing and the importance of following guidelines and will support provide responsive communication to members of the public in response to clusters and outbreaks

➤ **Safeguarding and educating our children**

- *Schools and settings*

30. Schools and settings were closed to most children from 20th March 2020, remaining open only for children of critical workers and vulnerable children. Schools continued to work with children remotely to ensure that education continued although in a different way. DfE cancelled GCSE and A level examinations for 2020 and Ofqual set out the process for schools and colleges to award grades for young people.
31. The Prime Minister announced on 10th May that phased wider opening of schools would resume from 1st June at the earliest. The guidance stated that early years, reception, year 1 and year 6 children would be the first to be welcomed back to school. This was in recognition of the transition faced by these year groups. The guidance stated that year 10 and year 12 pupils should have face to face teaching in schools from 15th June with an ambition for more primary and special school year groups to return before the end of the academic year.
32. Unfortunately, the government guidance did not recognise the three-tier nature of part of Worcestershire's school system. When the guidance was received from the DfE we made representation about this, as did Head Teachers from the schools affected. We talked to local MPs who also wrote to the Secretary of State advocating on behalf of schools and pupils concerned. The DfE responded that they expected all mainstream schools to follow the guidance and start with the three year groups have specified. The Middle School Heads group in the county discussed the position for Worcestershire considering the guidance and agreed that they would follow this.
33. The Worcestershire Education Incident Planning Group for COVID-19, consisting of WCF, WCC and school leaders from all phases, have agreed a set of basic principles some of which have been in place throughout this COVID response period and some relate to the basis of working towards recovery. These were approved by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills:

- The highest priority and consideration is the safety and wellbeing of Worcestershire children, young people, families and staff
 - Reducing the risk of infection and following PHE/DFE guidance is key to any risk assessment and related actions
 - We want to support a collaborative approach across Worcestershire schools and settings, governors and trust boards, Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire Children First, DfE, Trade Unions and other key stakeholders
 - We want to support a sustainable and progressive approach to wider reopening
 - Increasing the attendance for vulnerable children along with children of critical workers will continue to be a priority
 - The re-opening and inclusion for all children in Reception, year 1 and year 6 will be risk assessed and decisions about phasing, timing and management made, based on the outcomes of risk assessments
 - An inclusive and therapeutic approach to reintegration will be taken, and particularly for those children and young people who may find a return to school or setting challenging
 - Schools and settings will assess building capacity and spaces and utilising protective measures decide on group sizes up to 15 pupils in the first instance
 - Schools and settings will work with partners to support children and their families, for example health services, Here2Help and social care
 - We will continue to reflect, assess, learn and share with our schools, settings and from other examples
34. WCF produced a detailed risk assessment framework for schools to use to ensure that they were considering all reasonable action to take to ensure that they could safely welcome more pupils. This included:
- **Theme 1: Protective measures and hygiene**
 - **Theme 2: Accommodation / site usage**
 - **Theme 3: Safeguarding**
 - **Theme 4: Staffing**
 - **Theme 5: Governance**
 - **Theme 6: Communication**
 - **Theme 7: Pupil and staff well-being**
 - **Theme 8: Learning**
 - **Theme 9: Vulnerable learners**
 - **Theme 10: Suppliers**
 - **Theme 11: Transport**
 - **Theme 12: Costs associated with expanded opening**
35. Decisions about when and how to open were the responsibility of head teachers, governing bodies and trust boards. For maintained schools where the County Council is the employer there is a broader health and safety duty to fulfil. A team

of public health, health and safety, HR and WCF education staff have reviewed the completed risk assessments for the 94 Local Authority Maintained Schools (Community and VC) with one or more of the three year groups affected in order to support the decisions for the governing bodies.

36. On 1 June 2020 more than 75% of the primary aged year groups were open with 60% of early years settings. More were planning to open in following weeks. This has been a considerable achievement by the county's early years and schools in light of the amount of work required in a short period of time.

37. Work continues to support schools to take more pupils before the end of the academic year. Space and staffing capacity continue to be limiting factors to the numbers of pupils who can be accommodated whilst complying with required protective measures and hygiene requirements.

- *Home to school transport*

38. Transport are continuing to work closely with colleagues in WCF and with all Worcestershire's schools to identify the current transport needs and the potential requirements for the wider reopening of schools on 15 June. This will take into account any reduced capacity due to social distancing guidelines for vehicles.

39. We are currently managing the number of pupils requiring transport within our current resource, however, as this number grows, this will become more challenging requiring additional resource to meet social distancing guidelines. Estimates for additional costs will be met from the Covid-19 grant and are captured in financial returns to Government.

- *Safeguarding*

40. The social care and safeguarding service has worked under the Covid 19 service delivery protocol introduced from the beginning of April which set out the approach to delivery in light of the need to minimise community spread of the virus and cope with the reduction of staff capacity. From 1st June the service delivery protocol has been updated to phase 2 'road to recovery'. This is designed to allow the service to:

- Resume key safeguarding service activities regarding the assessment, planning and decision making for children subject to plans and ensure we have timely and effective assessment and interventions for those identified as in need of support or protection.
- Adapt and respond to the "Recovery and Re-set" agenda of the Government in the context of minimising the spread of infection and protecting our workforce
- Respond to the views and wishes of Staff and Managers in how we can effectively deliver our services in the medium term and prepare for long term delivery learning from the Covid19 initial periods.

41. The major changes to the original protocol are:
- Resumption of direct 'face to face' work with children to support well-informed professional judgements about support and protection planning
 - Family Front Door management of contacts and referrals will resume in a co-located office-based setting at County Hall in order to support effective multi-agency information sharing and decision making.
 - Supervised family time has been held 'virtually' during the pandemic in order to reduce risk of transmission. In the light of the revised government guidance face to face family time will be reintroduced for those children who are not shielded or living with those who are shielded.
 - Direct work will resume with children and young people where the level of concern is increasing to the consideration of legal proceedings including pre proceedings.
 - To support workflow required to help prepare for the full opening of services:
 - Review child protection conferences will resume (virtually) where assessment is that the threshold for significant harm is no longer met and Children in Need (CIN) cases which have been identified as having no evidence of concern will be updated and closed following senior manager review. Other CIN cases will remain open with Keeping In Touch calls and visits according to assessed needs.
 - Community short breaks for children with disabilities were halted at the start of the pandemic with the alternative option of crisis home support. It is now time to plan for the reopening of these services in order to support these families.
42. This impact reintroduces more direct work with children, more staff accessing county office bases to support effective management oversight and multi-agency working. This will be reviewed following six weeks to inform the next phase of recovery, whilst incorporating positive ways of working that have been effective during the pandemic.

➤ **Infrastructure recovery**

- **Flood recovery**

43. It is easy to forget with everything going on that back in February 2020 we saw the wettest February on record in the UK and the fifth wettest month since records began in 1862. The River Severn reached its highest ever recorded level at Barbourne in Worcester, and the river was at flood warning levels for longer than ever before – there was an equivalent of more than 100 London double-decker buses of water passing through Bewdley every minute for 24 days. 682 residential properties and 258 businesses in Worcestershire were seriously impacted by the flooding.
44. On 13 March the River Severn at Bewdley was still at flood warning level and only 10 days later the Government announced the beginning of lockdown due to COVID-19. In practice the flood recovery started during the response period in February with welfare visits to affected residents and businesses, but the COVID-

19 virus and associated lockdown has hampered flood recovery efforts since mid-March.

45. In response to this, Worcestershire's residents and businesses affected by the recent flooding are being given the opportunity to discuss their questions and concerns with local flood recovery experts from May and into June through a new virtual platform. Worcestershire County Council and the district councils have been working with the National Flood Forum to set up a 'Virtual Information Trailer' which will offer help, support and advice to those who have been affected by the floods in line with current COVID-19 guidelines. The project is being funded by the Environment Agency and has been extended to cover Shropshire Council and Telford & Wrekin Council which also experienced devastating flooding.
46. The Council also responded quickly by setting aside the Worcestershire Flood Support Scheme of £250,000 to support residents and businesses most affected by the funding events. This money is in addition to Government support that targeted the most affected areas. Initial tranche of funding has gone to residents in those areas not able to claim Government funds and the remaining funds will be managed locally within each divisional area affected, informed by the National Flood Forum consultation and targeted at community and related support activity to ensure it has the most impact.
47. With some reduction in the COVID-19 lockdown, works in relation to small scale flood and drainage schemes are restarting this month. Many focussed around key flood spots and mitigating issues that have arisen during the 2019/20 flood events.

- **Highways**

48. Core Highways work has continued throughout the COVID-19 response period. Larger surfacing and footways works were impacted due to COVID-19. Now revised guidance has enabled this to be reviewed and restart allowed, with the vast majority of works back underway in June.
49. Work is being carried out in accordance with the DfT Project Safestart and Department of Business, Industry and Energy guidance on highways works as agreed with Public Health England (PHE). This includes; Teams/gangs going to site spaced in vehicles, use of PPE, spacing of 2m wherever practical when outside, reducing risks (though guidance recognises this is not always possible and details mitigation measures).

50. The prioritisation of works has been based around:
- Core safety critical works, throughout the County.
 - General capital and reactive and cyclic works.
 - Essential works to ensure we maintain the Highways Asset effectively over the next 3 to 6 months as much as reasonably practicable in light of COVID-19 impacts, and to reduce the rate of deterioration of the Highway, where practicable. This will also ensure we reduce the growth of safety critical pothole repairs and keep roads running as safely as practical for critical services and essential journeys.
 - Improving the safety of the Highways network, at high priority locations.
 - Completing works which will help reduce the impacts of future severe weather events, such as flood spot works, tree management etc.
51. The following work is being completed within that framework therefore as priority:
- Highways Safety Inspectors operating as field workers and continue to complete the Safety Inspections regime as per monthly's (A roads), quarterlies (mostly B's and some C's) and Annuals (unclassified).
 - Pre-patching for Surface Dressing was restarted on 2 May, focussed initially in rural areas, moving into some carefully defined urban areas. Patching will continue through the whole year to improve asset condition and in preparation for Surface Dressing works next year.
 - Surface dressing initially started in rural areas on 11 May. Due to commence in the urban areas on 22 June. Aim to complete by the end of July.
 - Other surfacing works (e.g. full surfacing, not patching works) commence in July.
 - Grass cutting is on schedule for completion of the full first cut by mid-June (subject to weather and any other issues). Visibility splays are being checked and reviewed and sign clearance matters where identified are being sorted.
 - Lining and cats eyes works were impacted due to flooding and to some degree COVID-19, but now increased to meet requirements regarding safety critical lining, defects, Surface Dressing lining, other surfacing lining, double yellow lines.
 - Gullies have of course been significantly impacted by flooding. Resources have been increased to focus on all key identified flood spots (in excess of 120) and a major clearance of rural gullies (having suffered significant impacts from the five months of flooding). Any public enquiry and member identified issues are all being investigated and resolved as necessary.
 - Safety critical defect repairs are being completed on schedule (1 hour, 1 day, 1 week and 4 weeks as required).
 - Footways works has restarted with the number of gangs increasing as of July. Work will then continue through rest of year (subject to weather).

➤ Major Infrastructure Projects

52. In accordance with recent guidance from Transport Minister Baroness Vere, work has resumed on most major infrastructure schemes. Contractors are required to comply with the Highway Sector's recently issued Site Operating Procedures which require personnel with symptoms to stay at home and sets out clear hygiene and travel procedures for those attending site. This has meant that our major projects are continuing to be delivered including:
- **Southern Link Road** – feedback from users of the footbridge during these times have found that this facility is extremely popular with walkers, cyclists, and joggers which has seen increased activity. Further work continues and whilst recent events of both flooding and COVID 19 will impact on the project plan a Community Liaison Group (CLG) has been established to keep local communities abreast of the work and to enable local members to raise comments or concerns.
 - **A38 Bromsgrove** – work continues to improve this highway and in particular bidding and lobbying for future funds has not stopped and remains a key focus despite efforts being diverted to respond to COVID 19 this remains a high priority.
 - **Town Centre and Congestion Schemes** - work has resumed on major infrastructure schemes across the County.

➤ Transport

53. Our internal Fleet team continues to support a number of specific response activities including:
- Receipt, storage and distribution of 400+ food parcels (these are slowly beginning to lessen);
 - Support for delivery of medical supplies;
 - Support for transportation of Waste Collection Operatives.
54. Transport has continued to be provided for children of key workers and with effect from 1 June reception, years 1, 6 and 10. With effect from 1 June, we are operating 61 mainstream contracts (transporting 154 pupils) and 119 SEND/Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) (transporting 146 pupils). Liaison with operators takes place on a weekly basis to identify their capacity regarding vehicles and drivers. The same applies to our in-house fleet to ensure that we always have an up to date, accurate forecast of assets available to undertake service provision.
55. The Transport Service continue to work with schools to ensure that the information provided is accurate and timely to ensure an effective response, and further information is included on this later in this report.
56. There has been extensive work with public transport operators to identify those services that will provide a benefit for commuters e.g. adding additional vehicles on key commuter routes based on the latest DfT Guidance. Some services are

now back up to 70%-80% based on mileage and trip numbers from the pre COVID-19 levels. However, operators are still in ongoing discussions with DfT regarding funding for this increase and this is also heavily influenced by social distancing as vehicle capacity on all services is significantly reduced. We continue to work with smaller operators regarding contactless payments.

57. We are working with operators to improve public confidence in bus services to promote social distancing and ensure that there is clear guidance for the public at key locations.
58. A COVID-19 Bus Services Support Grant of £336k has been received from the DfT. Over the last few weeks, we have been working with operators to understand the specific detriment to services and how we can best support them with these funds.
59. In May, the Department of Transport also announced additional funding for active travel response to recovery post COVID-19. The funding is divided into two phases, Phase 1 is for the immediate response as part of recovery, Phase 2 is to support long term actions, in line with our Transport Strategy, LTP4. Full details of phase 2 are still to be confirmed. The allocations for Worcestershire are:
 - Phase 1 £271,000;
 - Phase 2 £1,082,000.
60. A package of proposals for Phase 1 has been developed which supports the delivery of active travel routes and policies set out in Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). The focus of the interventions is on key commuting routes supporting permanent future upgrades through small scale works such as changes to the white lines and signing.
61. In addition to these proposals we will work with partners if they wish to provide additional cycle parking. We will also provide information on active travel routes and “bikeability” training to promote safer cycling. Also, we are working with partners to explore the potential for them to consider a cycle hire scheme for travel to work or education.
62. We continue to maintain 100% of the contract payment for operators and concessionary and Severncard reimbursements. At the outset, patronage was reduced by circa 90% on public transport but indications are that we are seeing a slight increase and work with operators continues.

- **Broadband, 5G and Connectivity**

63. Superfast Worcestershire continues the drive to ensure Worcestershire is one of the best-connected counties in the UK. Had the current COVID-19 situation arisen even two years ago many rural residents and businesses would have found it far more difficult to have followed government advice to stay at home and stay safe without decent connectivity to allow them to work, access key public service, shop and entertain themselves. The earlier investment decisions by central government and local government have made a difference, still

recognising there are gaps to solve and the aspiration to reach full gigabit capability is more important than ever.

64. The Worcestershire 5G consortium has continued to explore the potential of 5G connectivity in improving productivity across Industry 4.0 and Advanced Manufacturing. The funded project ends in June 2020. The team are also exploring new applications into 5G funding programmes including '5G Create' and how Worcestershire can continue to drive forward and lead in this area of innovation.

➤ **Waste collection and our HRCs**

65. Following the opening of seven of the Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) in Worcestershire as of 11 May, it was important to understand how the new operating arrangements would work. We have continued to work with our contractor to reopen more Household Recycling Centres (HRC's), thereby increasing the total capacity available for residents to dispose of their household waste. This should assist in relieving pressure on the sites already operational and also the highways network. To reopen more HRCs (beyond the initial 7) has required additional resourcing recognising the new social distancing and operating measures at each of the locations. The HRCs in Droitwich and Worcester West were selected as the next to be made operational as they have a combination of reasonable off-road queuing, longer opening hours and size, which combined provides for safer operations and greater capacity, alleviating some of the pressure on the other centres that have already reopened.
66. On Wednesday 27 May, the County Council announced that two further HRCs would be operational as of Thursday 28 May. On Thursday 4 June the plans for opening of the Upton HRC were announced, including a period of extended opening for this location. This means that 10 of the 11 sites in Worcestershire are now open and operating in line with the new social distancing requirements.
67. We continue to work with our contractor and highways colleagues to agree a plan to enable the opening of the HRC in Kidderminster. Due to the restrictions in place to ensure social distancing measures can be adhered to, less vehicles are allowed in to the HRC at any one time than before these measures were introduced. As the location of the Kidderminster site is near local businesses and parked vehicles and has a shared use access, there is no space for queuing vehicles. This means we need to continue to carefully consider the right operations plan to progress how the site could be safely opened.
68. We continue to encourage residents to check the website for full details of the social distancing measures, opening times and other restrictions before they visit the HRC.
69. The sites have been very busy since re-opening and so residents may have to queue for a long time before they are able to access the sites as only a limited number of cars will be allowed in at any one time. We have worked with colleagues in Highways and have had traffic management in place where necessary, although some of these measures have been removed in line with demand.

➤ **Management of our workforce and assets**

- *Our workforce*

70. We continue to build on our workforces willingness to focus on delivery of COVID-19 response which has demonstrated the can-do attitude, adaptability and versatility of our employees. The majority of the workforce have been able to and continue to work from home proving the concept that teams can work from home effectively and be productive.
71. We have been able to introduce a number of short-term policy and condition changes including seven day working patterns adopted in many areas to cope with demand. We may want to consider future permanent adoption of some provisions for future new ways of working as we move to recovery.
72. We have seen several examples of innovation and creativity in the workforce e.g. HR creation of CAP forms to link national testing programme to local requirements and logistics working with Piston Gin for production of hand sanitizer – fast thinking, innovative ideas.
73. HR, OD and Engagement have continually encouraged and promoted social time with teams, non-work related meetings and made resilience training available to all WCC staff (led by Psychologist) to promote employee well-being. This has been supported by regular guidance issued on ways of working including signposting to national support programmes and working from home guidance supporting the workforce in their roles
74. As we move to recovery we need to design and move to a more comprehensive future fit mental health and wellbeing offer. This links to the identification of clinically vulnerable and extremely clinically vulnerable employees. This pandemic has identified the importance of understanding the demographics of our workforce. We need to consider what we know, what we don't know and how we can use this profiling in future as part of workforce planning and our health and wellbeing offer to staff.
75. We have focused on regular dialogue with our recognised Trade Unions (Teachers and NJC) throughout the pandemic. This supports the introduction of a new Trade Union framework introduced pre pandemic – quite simply it has worked effectively and has led to avoidance of any disputes. This new approach has been instrumental in the wider re-opening of schools and will be key to our future ways of working.
76. At the forefront of recovery and reset is our building risk assessment processes. Our HR and Health & Safety team has been working continuously to identify future capacity for our building to ensure social distancing compliance. This will ensure we can protect our workforce including reviewing individual risk assessments for clinically vulnerable employees.
77. Our priority now is to design a new workforce strategy for our future workforce. This strategy will need to focus on our three-year plan setting out our organisational workforce priorities including creating the right conditions,

wellbeing, resilience, working environment, leadership, skills for the future, recruitment and retention of talent, digitalisation and workforce transformation.

78. As an immediate response to COVID19 the Council sourced and procured external (non-government source) PPE stock (masks, gloves, aprons, eye protection, hand sanitizer) in order to support demand from WCC staff and care providers. A storage and distribution hub was set up and an online request system implemented providing either same day or next day delivery of emergency PPE where requests were validated. Emergency PPE is currently being provided free of charge. Over 500,000 items have been distributed to date.
79. Going forward working with our local partners, and providers, it is proposed that the County Council will run and manage a One Worcestershire Storage hub for PPE for our care providers to maximise economies of scale and purchasing power in buying this equipment. A storage facility will be leased and managed by the County council with these costs sought to be recovered via Government funding, however the PPE itself will be charged at actual purchase cost to providers.

- *Our buildings*

80. A longer-term strategy is being developed to open all of our buildings at first to staff and later the public. This section sets that out across the wide range of buildings we run.
81. Work has been completed at County Hall to implement 'Covid Secure' work areas in accordance with the central government issued guidance. This work has consisted of implementing one-way systems, marking with stickers which desks can and cannot be used, signage requiring single occupancy of lifts, restrictions on use of meeting rooms, system for limiting occupation of toilets, additional cleaning etc. In addition, a protocol and video have been produced for staff who need to use County Hall and other office buildings as to how to act in order to maintain social distancing and avoid interaction with others.
82. These restrictions significantly reduce the capacity of County Hall to approximately a maximum of 175 staff. The central government guidance remains that staff should work at home if at all possible and it is only staff who are in critical roles that cannot be done remotely that should be allowed to attend offices.
83. As there has been no announcement yet from central government on re-opening buildings to the public then County Hall and all other buildings remain closed to public access.
84. A process for re-opening other Council buildings has been developed that includes a risk assessment process to ensure that all physical alterations and ways of working are identified and implemented prior to re-opening. This process also includes ensuring that any compliance work, e.g. water testing for legionella, is also undertaken. A prioritised list of buildings has been produced with target opening dates, where these are known and will be updated as information is received from central government.

- *Our commercial estate, including farms*

42. Where the Council has a commercial tenant, it is the tenant's responsibility to implement any changes required. Where there are common areas such as receptions, toilets etc that are the Council's responsibility these will be risk assessed and changes implemented as needed.
85. Our farm tenants are in the main continuing to operate as normal. A small number of farms are predominantly horticultural cropping and reliant on European labour and this element is being monitored. Although farms were excluded from the general opportunity to request a rent freeze during the pandemic, all tenants were encouraged to discuss any financial concerns regarding paying their rent and no farm tenants have contacted the Council for assistance with reduced rent payments or rent-free periods.

- *Libraries*

86. Guidance currently indicates that Libraries could reopen in early July 2020. The key principles underpinning Worcestershire's library re-opening will be steered by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) taskforce for Recreation & Leisure and is likely to be in three phases as follows:

87. *Phase 1: 6 July 2020 for 2 or 3 weeks* - Will see 6 main libraries open:

- The Hive
- Redditch
- Kidderminster
- Bromsgrove
- Malvern
- Evesham

The service offer for Phase 1 will comprise:

- Reserve and Collect Service (home library items only)
- Book returns (into quarantine)
- Managed access to Public Network Computers
- Possible library Service At Home (LSAH) depending on availability of volunteers

Current advice from Public Health England is that returned books should be quarantined for 72 hours, after which time they pose no risk for transmission of the virus.

88. *Phase 2: end Phase 1 to end August 2020* - will incorporate additional libraries that have sufficient staff available to open the library, manage entry to the building and support social distancing. At present they include:

- Droitwich
- Pershore
- Stourport
- Tenbury

The service offer for Phase 2 will comprise:

- Self-service browsing and borrowing service

- Signposting
- Normal reservation service (depending on availability of van deliveries)
- Book returns (into quarantine)
- Managed access to Public Network Computers
- Managed use of space for wi-fi

In Phase 2 when we include self-service browsing and borrowing, stock will be touched as customers browse shelves. This is no different from retail settings and normal hand hygiene and avoiding touching the face will mitigate risks of transmission of the virus.

89. Re-opening protocols have been shaped by Libraries Connected Toolkit, as well as the County Council's Public Health and Health and Safety professionals, to ensure safe social distancing environments for staff and customers. A standard Risk assessment has been prepared – with local adjustments as required at each location. Phased re-opening will be adopted to support social distancing, gauge public response and demand for services, refine safe operating procedures and ensure a sustainable service offer. Work will continue to develop a comprehensive and high-quality digital library service offering as an effective and attractive alternative to physical library visits.
90. Re-opening plans also include emergency plans for closing in response to the possibility of a second wave of Covid 19 and have also ensured that requirements to sustain the Here2Help service, with appropriate levels of support continuing, can be met.
91. *Phase 3: 1 September 2020 until further notice* - Depending on the extent to which social distancing guidelines can be relaxed and availability of staff and volunteers, Phase 3 will see a re-opening of all libraries where there are adequate staff and/or volunteers.

Service offer for Phase 3 will comprise:

- Self-service browsing and borrowing service
 - Signposting
 - Normal reservation service (depending on availability of van deliveries)
 - Book returns (into quarantine)
 - Managed access to Public Network Computers
 - Managed use of space for wi-fi
 - Possible LSAH depending on availability of volunteers
 - Library events and activities that can be delivered safely
 - Mobile Library - subject to social distancing restrictions and driver availability
- *Museums*
92. Museums have an important role to play as the country returns to a new normal, offering a safe way for residents to leave their homes and with a proven wellbeing impact. Preparations are being made to safely reopen Worcestershire County

Museum at Hartlebury Castle to the public on the first date allowable under government direction (currently set for 4 July 2020).

93. All preparations are made, in partnership with our site partners, Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust (HCPT) and all risk assessments and procedures completed. This includes appropriate cleaning regimes, protocols for visitors, including social distancing and signage which will direct visitors on a one-way route through the Castle
94. Museums Worcestershire will use a strong, simple message for its reopening publicity, aimed at welcome, reassurance and communication of the measures in place. We will apply for Visit Britain's coronavirus-safe kite-mark.
95. HCPT will take on the welcome and admission role, as they are able to sell timed tickets online as well as take admissions fees using contactless payments in the bothies. HCPT will be opening for grounds-only visits from 30 May with a donation system in place. This does not require any change to the lockdown position of the County Museum and its staff.

- *Registrars*

96. Worcestershire's registration service has continued to register deaths, via the telephone, during the pandemic. The team have worked with Health and Safety and Public Health to ensure that appropriate adaptations are in place to ensure ongoing adherence to social distancing guidance remains, when services start to come back online.
97. The suspension of Birth Registrations and Notices of Marriage was removed on the 31 May 2020. Neither the service or the General Register Office was aware of the plan prior to the announcement meaning initial plans have had to be brought forward to implement the appropriate adaptations to premises. This includes access to building, appropriate facilities for users, screening in the offices, signage and guidance to ensure ongoing adherence to social distancing. The service resumed birth registration on 10 June 2020.
98. Notices of Marriage will be undertaken for urgent requests (marriages overseas etc). Remaining Notices will resume once further guidance has been received around Marriages/Civil Partnerships. Not all locations will be able to complete birth registrations due to the co-location with services that are currently closed and therefore inaccessible to the public. This includes Malvern and Evesham where the service is co-located with libraries. Bromsgrove is planning to re-open as the physical layout differs and subject to suitable access control. There are plans to increase availability of appointments in the other offices to compensate
99. No announcement has been made as yet about the recommencement of our other services including notices of marriage and citizenship ceremonies. It is envisaged that small ceremonies will be allowed during phase 2 in July and resource capacity is available and planned to be available at this time.

- *Social Care Day Centres*

100. Worcestershire County Council is responsible for and runs 9 day services, for people with Learning Disabilities, these have all been closed since March and all service users have been contacted and alternative support has been put in place, as required.
101. During Phase 2 in early July some of the centres will start to re-open – the capacity within these services will be determined by ensuring that social distancing guidelines can be practiced, during service users' attendance. This will mean that fewer people can initially return to their day service support and these will be prioritised by need – noting that all service users have been risk assessed and those with the highest risk of carer breakdown will be prioritised for day service support in the first phase.
102. Changes to service delivery, put in place during the pandemic, have given rise to different ways of working and support, being provided in people's homes or by staff and/or volunteers in the community, close to people's homes. Consideration is now being made to how the service may be improved and/or re-designed to continue with local and community-based support in the future.

- *Home Care*

103. Worcestershire County Council's home care service has continued, throughout the pandemic, with staff re-deployed from other areas of the People Directorate to ensure appropriate capacity to domiciliary care provision given in people's homes and in the County's prisons.
104. The service is now planning to introduce the Community Reablement service, due originally to go live in April 2020 – it is envisaged that this service will be promoted and be in place from the Autumn.

- *Residential Settings*

105. The Communities Division are also planning innovative approaches to enabling family and friends to visit residents in our residential settings, including proposals for visitors to be allowed to meet with residents outside, with social distancing guidelines in place.

- *Procurement*

106. Government have issued their latest Procurement Policy Notice (PPN) reference 04/20 ([Link](#)) to apply 1 July to 30 October 2020. This is guidance to public sector bodies around procurement and contract practices during COVID19. A key element of this is that the Council review it's arrangements with all contractors and look to transition and exit any arrangements agreed in the initial response to COVID19. The guidance does still require prompt payment to suppliers, but it also calls for an audit trail of decisions and an open book approach with providers to assess what support was provided by the Council to ensure no supplier made a profit as a result of the Council's variations to its contract or payment terms. The Council will be carrying out a full review of its contract portfolio and working with Internal Audit to review payments and awards to ensure value for money.

The Council will also be developing a transition and exit appropriate to the need and risk.

- IT

107. The IT team are very aware of the importance of effective and resilient IT systems and networks and continue to enhance both building on recent investment and network development, this includes:

- Network Performance / Resilience:
 - In addition to our primary Internet Data Circuit located within County Hall, a secondary Internet Data Circuit has now been installed at Wildwood. This now ensures we have a fully resilient internet connection that we can failover to in the event that County Hall becomes unavailable. This is critical in ensuring our remote working system remains available and so that the increased number of cloud hosted systems we now have would still be available for staff.
 - We have now upgraded a key link within the system from a 1 Gigabit per second to a 10 Gigabits per second link. This has added further resilience to our network infrastructure enhancing the performance of our remote working system.
- Liquid Logic – our social care system
 - Improvements to Liquid Logic have also focussed on improving the resilience of the system. We have worked with Liquid Logic to implement a third application server to improve the memory and increase the number of users who are able to access the system at any time. We have also applied a number of fixes to issues that were causing issues on the system. Post go live support has been a priority for our users in the first 2 months and we have now migrated to business as usual support.
- Video Conferencing
 - Throughout the Covid-19 crisis we have seen a dramatic increase in the amount of Lync video conferencing meetings being undertaken by staff. This has placed a huge load on the servers. To address this issue the Council has begun to roll out the Zoom Video Conferencing to all WCC machines. This is being configured in such a way to avoid impacting our own network performance. Work is underway with the rollout and we expect to complete this work later in June. Our own Cabinet was successfully run using Zoom on 4 June 2020 and other councillor meetings have also been and will be run using this tool to ensure democratic governance is maintained as well as being open and transparent. In addition the technology is being used to support over 200 school admission appeals.

- Learning & Achievement Insourcing
 - The IT & Digital Service have undertaken a significant amount of work over the last 2 months to ensure a smooth IT transition for the staff transferring back to the Council. Some of the key activities were:
 - 96+ Laptops and 46 mobiles configured and handed over to staff
 - Migration of all Education Services website content over to the WCF website
 - Transfer of various IT systems (CPD-Online, Tempus, Estore)
 - Migration of data to WCC network drives and required permissions applied
 - Information Audit and Information Sharing Agreements created / updated

- Covid-19 Digital Response
 - We have continued to add additional functionality to the Here2Help system to aid the Council in matching volunteers with residents who have raised requests for help. These areas include:
 - Specific dashboard for the Volunteer Coordination Team to enable to undertake additional checks (e.g. a Health check, request an ID check and DBS check)
 - Specific dashboard for HR to progress requests for DBS checks.
 - Matching of offers of help can now be on district, town, village or ward and parish.

➤ Governance

108. Regulations under the Coronavirus Act enable the Council to hold formal meetings remotely, enabling Councillors to take part and vote whilst social distancing. Members of the public are able to watch these meetings on-line as these are broadcast via YouTube.
109. Due to the resources involved in responding to the virus, and in one case due to a lack of business, meetings planned to be held in late March, April and May were cancelled. Most are now resuming where there is a business need, including Overview and Scrutiny. Cabinet and Directorate briefing meetings are also being held to enable representatives from the political groups and relevant scrutiny leads to be kept informed.
110. Whilst social distancing requirements remain in place the ability to hold meetings remotely will enable the democratic function to continue. Changes to procedure rules during this period have not been suggested and the Council is maintaining the ability for public participation at its meetings. Officers are constantly reviewing the situation.

Legal Implications

111. The Council has responded to the national emergency in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, including participating in the Local Resilience Forum and working as 'One Worcestershire' with the District Councils to support residents and continue to provide services.

112. As reported to the Cabinet meeting on 26 March, the Coronavirus Act 2020 had just received Royal Assent. This changed requirements for certain service delivery and enabled changes to be made to current policy approaches, with a potential impact on finances. Various aspects of the Act have been implemented through Regulations and guidance has also been issued. Cabinet in March authorised officers to take appropriate action in relation to the coronavirus pandemic, including authorising expenditure and making temporary changes to Council policies arising from the Act, associated legislation, national guidelines and Government directions.
113. With the rapid development of the virus and the Council's response, notice of these decisions in March could not be given on the Cabinet Forward Plan, and it was not possible to convene a meeting of the Council to agree to the changes to the budget and policy framework. In accordance with constitutional requirements, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board was consulted and agreed to these decisions being taken as urgent. Cabinet is required to report to Council on the reasons for acting outside the policy and budget framework and the information presented here forms the basis for that report to the July Council meeting.
114. Officer decisions have been reported on the Council's website:
http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/download/1403/officer_executive_decision_making_-_record_of_officer_executive_decisions_2020

Financial Implications

115. The situation remains largely unchanged from that reported to Cabinet on 4 June 2020 - the County Council has received £25.5 million in grant allocations from Government against which it expects to spend £15m by the end of June 2020.
116. Looking beyond June we still expect to incur significant costs in relation to ongoing or suppressed demand. We are also forecasting higher costs in response to ongoing social distancing measures in areas such as transport. However without clarity and the potential for changes we are not able to place reliable forecasts on this. We are assuming however that Government will continue to work with us and support financially our recovery work, that includes overheads from the PPE Central Store and Hub discussed in this report which we estimate will be less than £0.1 million but we do expect to spend around £1 million on PPE and thus need to assure we recover costs where appropriate in line with any Government guidance.
117. In addition, the Council continues to work with the local CCG and NHS England to recover additional. We have now submitted three claims totalling £1.6 million and our working assumption remains that all such costs will be funded 100% from the NHS £1.3 billion allocation.
118. The s151 Officer with his peers continues to liaise with MHCLG and the County Council Network (CCN), regarding our future need. At this stage that is very hard to predict, and Finance continue to model and work with Government over our future need, including the impact on our Council Tax and Business Rates income / bases. This will be reported to Cabinet throughout 2020/21.

119. In addition, of the £600 million funding made available for Care Homes and to manage infection control in our providers of adult care of which the Council received £7.5 million, we have so far paid out over £3 million. In line with guidance 25% has been withheld and will be distributed in consultation with Public Health to support infection control and protection measures required and determined locally.

Risk Implications

120. A risk register has been maintained by Silver throughout the process and reviewed, with any escalation to Gold as appropriate.

Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments

121. The response and recovery is being led with the Director of Public Health playing a key role in both the Council's Gold governance arrangements and the LRF engagement. Full assessments of risk and actions are being carried out on a daily basis and further information has been included within the body of this report.

Supporting Information

No further information

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Chief Executive) the following are background papers in support of this report

Cabinet Paper 4 June 2020 -
<https://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=131&MId=3167&Ver=4>

CABINET
25 JUNE 2020**COVID-19 Economic Restart Plan**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Cllr K Pollock

Relevant Chief Officer

Director for Economy and Infrastructure

Recommendation

1. **The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Economy and Infrastructure recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) **Notes and endorses the action taken by the Council in supporting the County wide activity of the Covid – 19 Economic Response, Recovery and Resilience Group, and the work to date on the Economic Recovery Plan;**
 - (b) **Accept the Open For Business Board’s recommendation to approve £3,574,500 of the Open for Business reserves to be used to fund grants to support local businesses as part of the economic restart planning.**
 - (c) **Continue to review the resources required to support the restart through the Open for Business Board in accordance with Financial Regulations, as set out at paragraphs 19 and 20 of the report.**

Background/Impact

2. The full economic impact of COVID 19 is yet to be fully understood, but as data from local, regional and national sources are collated, we start to see the enormity of the economic impact. From national data provided by ONS and OBR we can see that the projected decline in GVA across Worcestershire ranges from 26% to 41%, using this same approach our analysis finds that GVA for Worcestershire is estimated to fall by 36%, with the largest contribution to the fall from Manufacturing followed by Wholesale and retail, other sectors significantly affected in the county include accommodation, leisure, culture and entertainment”.
3. The National Business Survey undertaken by ONS shows that while businesses are beginning to return to operation, currently just over 20% of businesses are closed temporarily, of these they are reporting that 82% of staff have been furloughed compared to 22% of staff in those businesses that are still trading. As expected, sectors who are beginning to return to work following government guidelines are food businesses, manufacturing and construction.

4. Our local survey results paint a similar picture (from approx. 1200 respondents):

- 28% of businesses are either growing or operating at business as usual. 20% are commencing restart, 31% are ticking over, 19% are in survival mode and 2% are in crisis.
- 85% of businesses expect their profits to decrease this year as a result of Covid-19, with almost 20% expecting profit to decrease by 50% or more
- 24% of businesses have closed temporarily
- Almost 50% of businesses have expressed concerns about cashflow and lack of sales
- 35% of businesses are facing difficulties in returning to work
- Businesses have expressed concern about the effectiveness of supply chains in the coming weeks (and months), either supply of materials or services as well as distributors and sales channels.
- From our new survey released on 2nd June 47% of respondents have said they will be looking to adapt their products and services.

➤ Economic Restart Plan

5. Jointly with our WLEP partners, we formed a Worcestershire COVID-19 Economic Response, Recovery and Resilience Group (WCERG) which had its first meeting in March 2020. The purpose of the group is to inform and manage our collective response to the impact of COVID-19 on the Worcestershire economy, ensuring co-ordination of efforts in relation to our response, supporting recovery and building economic resilience. The group includes representatives from all Worcestershire Local Authorities, Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Regulatory Services, National Farmers Union (NFU), Worcestershire Business Central and Worcestershire Ambassadors.

6. The WCERG has now developed a clear seven-point action plan and for each area the group has identified actions already being undertaken, areas of support and activity that can be repurposed to have greater impact during this current situation. Under each action the group is developing additional support which is required as the impact on the economy and specific needs of business/sectors are identified. The seven-point action plan, each with an allocated lead who are co-ordinating the One Worcestershire response, including the short-term restart activity:

- **Business intelligence:** Developing our evidence base, information from national data and local business survey. While this is a about understanding the total impact, we are paying attention to the following areas; IT, Construction, Manufacturing, Tourism and Leisure, Town Centres and Health and Care
- **Keeping Business Informed:** Ensuring a consistent message across the partnership and no wrong front door approach. Worcestershire Business Central provides the primary point of contact, underwritten by the One Worcestershire digital footprint, Worcestershire Local Economic Partnership

and mirrored across the Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and the District Councils. This network had already actively made over 1400 call to local businesses in addition to responding to specific enquires. There is an established link between the business growth hub (WBC) and Here2Help to ensure customers receive a seamless service.

- **Business Support:** Reshaping current services and developing new relevant support in response to business needs; including access to finance, introduction of new technology, support for business strategy planning. Working with HW Chamber, FSB, WBC and Worcestershire Regulatory Services.
 - **Transport and Infrastructure:** reopening of major infrastructure scheme sites, continued development of strategic project pipeline, safely operating public transport, consulting with strategic employers to understand business travel plans.
 - **Employment and Skills:** Launch of two new helplines, Worcestershire Careers and Worcestershire Jobs Match, understanding the employment impact on young people, and highlighting the importance of digital skills. Emerging interventions to support graduate and apprenticeship employment.
 - **Town Centres:** Supporting Towns to be Open for Business, Healthy and Safe.
 - **Tourism:** Worcestershire County Council now has responsibility for Visit Worcestershire and is the Destination Management Organisation for Worcestershire working very closely with district tourism leads. Interventions include a refocused digital presence through June, and emerging target campaigns to position the county as a destination as lockdown eases.
7. The recovery group are confident in Worcestershire's response to date with co-ordinated activity delivered through established business channels and with 'one version of the truth'. Cabinet should note that this is an emerging recovery plan in response to what is an unprecedented event with significant economic impact. The recovery group will continue to horizon scan for national and regional activity, maintaining a dynamic structure capable of responding to local business need over the next 12 -18 months and what is likely to be an ongoing number of Government investment programmes and initiatives.
8. In addition there will be a need to consider long term resilience of the county in the context of the Economic Strategy and the baseline work that underpinned the Local Industrial Strategy, but recognising the significant changes that Covid-19 will have on certain markets, not least – high streets, commercial property and tourism / entertainment industry.
9. To support this recovery activity the County Council role in the restart can be summarised as:
1. Maintain and where possible accelerate investment in major schemes; to include game changer programme activity and wider economic / infrastructure development projects.

2. Deliver co-ordination, timely and accurate information to business community on national / regional programmes relevant to the county;
 3. Refocus and enhance current business support programmes to support economic restart and recovery;
 4. Use direct resources to support specific demands and opportunities to help the business community, include investment in additional people, resources and where necessary the business support organisation in the county;
 5. Ensure we have the best information we can – national analysis and local data.
10. As part of our response to the business support workstream and to support the restart of our local economy the County Council is proposing a fund of up to £3,574,500 from the Council's Open for Business Reserves (of which £2.1m is capital).
 11. The Open for Business Board provides leadership and direction across the council to drive policy, investment and service integration which enables and supports the successful delivery of the Council's Open for Business agenda and the ambitions of Worcestershire's Local Industrial Strategy.
 12. The Board have approved the application for additional funding from the OfB programme budget but given the nature and scale of activity felt it should refer the matter to Cabinet for approval.
 13. The Economic Resilience programme is aimed at WCC providing support for the local economy to support business recovery and resilience. We will look to provide grant support and professional advice and guidance to companies impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic over a two-year period, which will include providing grants of up to £25,000 but in certain circumstances up to £100,000.
 14. Revenue and Capital Grants of up to £25,000 will be available to SMEs (as defined by the European Commission) in Worcestershire and will be on a 50% match funded basis. The grants will support companies in the following areas
 - Business resilience
 - Business adjustments
 - Supply Chain development
 - Business change and transformation projects
 - Employment of graduates
 - Product/service diversification
 - Opportunity to scale up production
 - Introduction of new technology
 - Research and development
 - Diversification into new markets
 15. A limited number of capital grants up to £100,000 will be available for companies responding to the diversification and market shock associated with Covid-19.

16. Where identified for specific sectors/target areas the county Economic Development team will procure and deliver tailored solutions for the business community.
17. This will be managed under the Economic Development Team management structure adding in additional resource to drive delivery and ensure it reaches the local business community, in particular the identified key sectors of Manufacturing, IT and Cyber, Agri-tech and our corner stone sectors of Health and Care and Construction. Support will also be targeted at rapid growth companies and SME's.
18. Existing resources will be utilised to manage the scheme although it is recognised that additional capacity may need to be found if the scheme and recovery needs continued support. At this stage within financial regulations, the service will look to vire monies within various schemes as appropriate and also consider the use of earmarked reserves.
19. The aim of this programme is to where possible reduce the negative impact on the local economy and encourage the retention of jobs.
20. The Programme will also provide support to businesses online using one to many sessions and one to one sessions on specific topics, which will be will move to face to face interactions as restrictions lift. Bespoke, tailored support providing longer interventions will be available for companies with more complex needs to include topics such as:
 - Crisis scenario planning and management
 - Cashflow management and rapid cost reduction
 - Business, technology resilience and security
 - Supply chain management
 - Diversification, R&D
 - Workforce / Employment
 - Regulatory and compliance

Legal Implications

21. The Council has responded to the national emergency in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, including participating in the Local Resilience Forum and working as 'One Worcestershire' with the District Councils to support residents and continue to provide services.
22. As reported to the Cabinet meeting on 26 March, the Coronavirus Act 2020 had just received Royal Assent. This changed requirements for certain service delivery and enabled changes to be made to current policy approaches, with a potential impact on finances. Various aspects of the Act have been implemented through Regulations and guidance has also been issued. Cabinet in March authorised officers to take appropriate action in relation to the coronavirus pandemic, including authorising expenditure and making temporary changes to Council policies arising from the Act, associated legislation, national guidelines and Government directions.

Financial Implications

23. The Council in February 2020 added additional £4 million capital monies to the Open for Business Reserve. Whilst there are other commitments that are also being accounted for this decision would reduce the reserves to just over £3.5 million of capital only. Future calls or plans will continue to be reviewed in light of the revised level of reserves, and additional support if it were needed to support capacity to deliver could be sought from these reserves or virements within and across a range of schemes, subject to financial regulations.

Risk Implications

24. A risk register has been maintained by WCERG throughout the process and reviewed, with any escalation to the Council's senior leadership team dealing with the response and recovery as appropriate.

Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments

25. The response and recovery is being led with the Director of Public Health playing a key role in both the Council's Gold governance arrangements (the Council's high level group under the Local Resilience Forum) and the LRF engagement. Full assessments of risk and actions are being carried out on a daily basis and further information has been included within the body of this report.

Supporting Information

No further information

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer there are no background papers in support of this report

CABINET
25 JUNE 2020**RESOURCES REPORT – PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL RESULTS**
2019/20

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr S E Geraghty

Relevant Officer

Chief Financial Officer

Recommendations

1. **The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Finance (who is also the Leader of the Council) recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) **endorses financial performance for the year ending 31 March 2020 and the unaudited Annual Financial Report and Statement of Accounts 2019/20;**
 - (b) **approves updates to earmarked reserves and general balances as detailed in paragraphs 51 to 59,**
 - (c) **Considers the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20 for comment before final approval is sought from the Audit and Governance Committee; and**
 - (d) **Notes the emerging financial issues for the Council with regard to 2020/21 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Introduction

2. This report details the provisional financial results for the year ending 31 March 2020 subject to external audit, and notes progress to date on the savings and reforms programme.
3. The report identifies that the Council overspent it's £330 million budget by £0.3 million (0.1%), a reduction from the previous overspend forecast of £3.9 million reported to the March Cabinet meeting. This is a good result in bringing costs down at year end and represents a significant achievement as the Council has faced cost and demand pressures mainly arising on adult social care services.
4. It is recommended that the small £0.3 million overspend is funded by a transfer from the Financial Risk Reserve.
5. Cabinet is asked in this report to endorse the outturn position and approve the carry forward of the Council's Earmarked Reserves and unspent grant monies to the 2020/21 financial year.

6. Financial performance for the Council's Capital Budget and the Worcestershire Pension Fund is also reported.

Provisional Financial Results for the year ending 31 March 2020

7. The Council's formal statutory accounts have been prepared and transactional External Audit scrutiny has begun. This is an excellent achievement considering the impact of working arrangements on both the Council's and the External Auditor Grant Thornton LLP's staff as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Central Government has relaxed the deadlines for approval of the accounts to November 2020, however the Council's finance team has achieved its normal work schedule and an extract of the provisional unaudited accounts is included in this report at Appendix 1(a). The Public Inspection period will be advertised on the Council's website at http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/download/45/audit_of_accounts_-_notice_of_public_rights.

9. The statutory accounts, which are subject to External Audit scrutiny will be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 30 July 2020 together with an update on the external audit fieldwork completed at that date. The accounts are planned to be signed off with an unqualified audit opinion reported to the Audit and Governance Committee on 2 October 2020.

10. The County Council net budget of £330 million faced a number of cost pressures during 2019/20 and the overall outturn, as set out in Table 1 below, is for a net overspend of £0.3 million. This includes a net £0.7 million underspend on services.

11. The Council's main cost pressure during the year arose on Adult Services where the £126 million budget was overspent by £1.6 million (1.3%). An overspend had been forecast for a large part of the year due to demand pressures as reported to Cabinet, however this outturn shows an improved position due to management action. This overspend was also offset by underspends of £1 million on Community Services and £1 million on Economy and Infrastructure services.

12. School Balances overall reduced during the year to a net surplus of £1.4 million, and this is broken down further in table 2 later in the report. School's funding remains an area of concern and the Council and Worcestershire Children First are working to support schools in achieving their financial plans as well as lobbying Central Government. The non-schools Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will carry forward a deficit of £6.2 million and this will be carried forward and offset against future DSG income.

13. The Council's Earmarked Reserves has reduced by £5.2 million to £76.3 million at the end of the financial year. These reserves are set aside for specific purposes.

14. At the same time as facing in-year pressures the Council has progressed its savings plans and it can be confirmed that £15.8 million of the £28.1 million target has been achieved this year. Of the remaining £12.3 million: £7.2 million has been dealt with through resetting of the base budget in 2020/21; £3.8 million of waste savings have been managed through the waste reserve; and the rest (£1.3 million) has been carried forward to next financial year. Details of the achievement of each savings proposal is set out at Appendix 8.

15. Following storms Ciara and Dennis earlier this year, the Council set up a Worcestershire Flood Support Scheme and allocated £250,000 to support those most affected and the detail of how this will be administered is being worked through. The Council's own expenditure totalled £1.5 million and we are able to reclaim £0.9 million of this under the Government's Bellwin Scheme.

16. The COVID-19 pandemic started to have a financial impact for the County Council from the middle of March 2020 where expenditure totalled £0.4 million over the last two weeks of the financial year. The Council received £14.9 million (being the first part of a total of £25.5 million given to the Council) to support costs and unspent monies will be carried forward for use in 2020/21. The Council has since been given additional Infection Control funding to forward to social care providers and is able to reclaim monies from the CCG's to support hospital discharges. Further details around the financial implications for 2020/21 and onwards are detailed later in this report.

17. With regard to our debtors, we have increased our Bad Debt Provision by £1.4 million to £3 million taking into account the current financial climate and the financial challenges faced by individuals and businesses in light of COVID19. We will continue to review this in 2020/21.

18. Due to the economic growth in the County in 2019/20 additional business rates income of £8.7 million was gained during the year. This sum will be transferred into reserves to cover any future losses within the Collection Fund for appeals and reduced growth in on our local economy. As planned and in addition to this we will set aside £4.9 million for Social Care preventative work reflecting the benefit from the 2019/20 75% Business Rates Pool pilot.

19. The causes of significant Directorate outturn variations for 2019/20 are summarised in the following section at paragraphs [x] to [x], and variances by individual service area greater than £0.25 million are set out in more detail in Appendix 3.

20. The summary table below shows outturn variances for each service with greater detail shown at Appendix 2.

Table 1: Summary Outturn 2019/20

Service	2019/20 Net Budget	2019/20 Actual	19/20 Draft Variance Before Adj's	Transfer to Capital	Proposed Withdrawal from Reserves / Grants	Proposed C/Fwds	Variance After Adj's	Variance After Adj's	Variance Last Period	Change Since Last Period
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%	£000	£000
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	0	5,593	5,593	0	(5,593)	0	0	-	0	0
Children, Families and Communities (Excl DSG)	95,488	96,103	615	0	(66)	0	549	0.6%	629	(80)
Economy & Infrastructure	55,749	55,535	(214)	0	(769)	0	(983)	-1.8%	232	(1,214)
Commercial and Change	6,392	8,424	2,033	(682)	(2,634)	804	(479)	-7.5%	(528)	49
Chief Executive	1,566	1,339	(227)	(153)	(305)	138	(547)	-34.9%	(100)	(447)
Adults	125,870	128,208	2,338	0	(795)	0	1,643	1.3%	3,300	(1,657)
Communities	21,165	20,255	(910)	0	0	0	(1,009)	-4.8%	(117)	(892)
Public Health	2,389	2,471	82	0	0	0	83	3.5%	295	(212)
Total : Services (Excl DSG)	308,618	312,335	3,717	(835)	(4,569)	942	(745)	-0.2%	3,708	(4,453)
Finance / Corporate Items	30,883	22,185	(8,698)	0	(478)	6,316	(2,860)	-9.3%	(3,401)	541
Non-Assigned Items	(6,865)	0	6,865	0	(3,000)	0	3,865	-56.3%	3,750	115
Funding - Transfer From Reserves	(2,247)	0	2,247	0	(2,247)	0	0	0.0%	0	0
Total (Excl DSG)	330,390	334,520	4,131	(835)	(10,294)	7,258	259	0.1%	4,057	(3,797)

21. There are a number of significant cost pressures that arose across services during the year. Whilst these have been provided to Cabinet previously, their updated position is outlined below in more detail.

Children, Families and Communities – Budget £95.5m £0.5 million overspend

22. These services include the contract budget for Worcestershire Children First (WCF) which are reporting alongside services that remain with the County Council. In total these services are forecasting an overspend of £0.5 million (0.6%) at the end of the financial year, with no significant change from previously reported.

23. This comprises £0.8 million overspend that relates to the Council and £0.3 million underspend for WCF since the company's creation in October 2019.

24. The WCF £0.3 million underspend comprises £0.3 million overspend on Placements and Provision offset by staffing underspend of £0.2 million in social care and £0.4 million for resources support services.

25. For the services prior to WCF, the £72.6 million Children's Social Care budget is forecasting a small underspend of £0.1 million. Within this forecast is a £0.5 million overspend forecast for Placements and Provision, offset in the main by underspends of -£0.6 million across safeguarding, family front door and targeted family support teams.

26. The service is forecasting an overspend of £1 million on the £14.4 million Home to school and college transport budget, which includes potential inflationary pressures of £0.6 million and £0.4 million relating to the reversal of a 2018/19 accounting accrual.

27. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs block remains an area of significant concern. The previous year 2018/19 saw expenditure in excess of funding, with the Council not only using up completely non-schools DSG reserves, but moreover ending the year with a £0.6 million deficit reserve.

28. For 2019/20, the trend continued with a cost pressure of £8.7 million for High Needs. Whilst other areas of DSG funding has underspent to reduce this pressure, the net position is that there is an increase of £5.6 million to the DSG deficit with now totals £6.2 million at the end of the financial year. Whilst high, this is lower than forecast earlier in the year.

29. The Council and WCF recognise that Government have provided additional fund and we continue to work with Schools to optimise pressures within funding, whilst taking every opportunity to lobby Central Government about overall funding allocations.

30. It is worth noting that the Government have advised to treat this as an issue specifically relating to DfE/grant conditions and this deficit reserve cannot be charged to the Council's General Fund.

31. The forecast for school's balances earlier in the year showed the possibility of a net deficit position however the final position recovered to a net surplus of £1.4 million. This is, however, a cause for concern going forward with the main deficits relating to secondary schools.

32. The Council continually works with those schools most affected to support them in plans so they can return to a balance position, but the relatively low funding level does not help. This position is consistent with funding pressures faced by local government education services across the whole country and whilst we recognise Government has made some changes to the way it funds our schools it remains a key issue for the Council to support schools by lobbying Government for the right level of needs-based funding.

Table 2: Schools Outturn Position - Summary

£9.3m	Schools in Deficit
-£10.7m	Schools in Surplus
£1.4m	Net Surplus

People Directorate – Budget £149.4m, £0.7m overspend

33. The People Directorate, comprising Adult Social Care, Communities and Public Health, overspent its £149.4 million budget by £0.7 million (0.4%). This comprises a £1.6 million overspend on Adults Services offset mostly by a £1 million underspend on Community Services.

34. The Directorate achieved £8.1 million savings for the year compared to its target of £9.4 million.

35. The majority of Adult Services expenditure was broadly close to budget however there were a number of small variations with the largest being an £0.8 million increase in bad debt provision for services user contributions towards the costs of their care.

36. Older People placements saw both increases in the number of care packages and an increase in their costs during the year.

37. Provider Services achieved a net underspend of £0.5 million, which comprised a £1 million underspend on staffing costs within the side by side service offset by domiciliary care income pressures and other reduced costs.

38. Within Strategic Libraries and Learning there is an underspend of £0.3 million which is a result of general underspend across several libraries.

39. The Public Health Service manages a c.£30 million specific grant and a core County Council budget of £0.1 million.

40. During 2019/20 the Public Health service contributed an additional £0.15 million grant for Community Services and £0.7 million for Adults Services and will be carrying forward £6.4 million in reserves for future years.

Economy and Infrastructure – Budget £55.7m, £1m underspend

41. The Economy and Infrastructure Directorate achieved an underspend of £1 million (1.8%) compared with its £55.7 million budget.

42. Waste Services faced a cost pressure due a £3.7 million savings target but offset this by a mix of writing back outstanding accounting accruals, lower unit prices paid, additional trade waste income, lower Waste Pollution costs and by withdrawing an additional contribution of £2.7 million from the Waste Contract reserve.

43. A £0.3m overspend was incurred on Road Lighting Energy however this was offset by a £0.4 million reduction in Road Lighting Maintenance costs.

44. A £0.4 million underspend was also achieved by a reduced volume of concessionary fares payments.

45. A further underspend of £0.6 million was achieved by Streetworks services relating to vacancies and additional Fees and Charges income as a result of temporary road closures and unreasonably prolonged work on highways.

Commercial and Change – Budget £6.4m, £0.5m underspend

46. The 2018/19 outturn for the Commercial and Change Directorate is an underspend against budget of £0.5 million (7.5%).

47. The majority of the directorate's underspend relates to managing vacant posts across a number of areas and achieving contract savings and reduced asset management spend.

Finance/Corporate Items – Budget £30.9 m, - £2.9m underspend

48. The Financial Services budget includes corporate items such as Debt Interest.

The £30.9 million budget for Finance/Corporate Items underspent in line with previous forecasts in total by £2.9 million as follows:-

- £1.8 million underspend Whole Organisation Contingency. A corporate contingency of £0.750 million is maintained, which has been increased by a further £1 million set aside from specific grant income to £1.75 million. There are no commitments against this so the total amount has been released as an underspend to support overall cost pressures
- Financing Transactions Borrowing Costs were £1.4 million less than budgeted due to active treasury management.
- A £0.3 million reduction was achieved in the outturn from forecast for employer's pension contributions,
- £0.3 million of other costs were offset by the transformation reserve.
- These underspends were in part offset by a need to increase the corporate Bad Debt Provision in light of COVID19 by £0.9 million.

49. Following the application of the MRP policy review, it is proposed that £6.3 million will also be transferred to the financial risk reserve. This will replenish this reserve following draw downs in 2019/20.

Cross Cutting Items – Budget Savings Target £6.9m

50. Cabinet has already agreed to allocation £3 million from the Financial Risk Reserve to support this year's savings target reflecting where organisational redesign savings will take longer than first anticipated to achieve. The remaining £3.9 million mainly has related to cost avoidance activity, enabling savings that have been achieved on other budgets or that which will be achieved as a saving in future years.

General Balances

51. The County Council's General Balances are a contingency sum available to pay for unforeseen or exceptional circumstances. External auditors often refer to the level of general balances when considering an organisation's financial health. The value of general balances is as follows:

Table 3: General Balances

	£m
Balance at 31 March 2019	12.2
Transfer to / (from) General Balances	0.0
Balance at 31 March 2020	<u>12.2</u>

52. Worcestershire's General Fund Balance stand at £12.2 million, or 3.7% of net expenditure. There is no defined minimum balance. It is the responsibility of the Section 151 Officer to advise the Council of that level based on an assessment of risk. This was reported in January 2020 as being £12.2 million as part of the Cabinet 2020/21 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Update 2020-22 report ([Link](#)).

Earmarked Reserves and Grant Reserves

53. All earmarked and grant reserves are retained either under the delegated authority given to Chief Officers in the Financial Regulations or by Cabinet/Cabinet Member approval, this is subject to recommendations jointly by a Chief Officer in agreement with the Chief Financial Officer for carry forward each year.

54. It is intended that the County Council funds the 2019/20 overspend of £0.3 million by a one-off transfer from the Financial Risk Reserve.

55. The January 2020 Cabinet 2020/21 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update 2020-22 report included a forecast of Earmarked Reserves which was based on the best knowledge available at Period 8 and this is broadly consistent with the amount of reserves available at the end of 2019/20.

56. During the year, the Council drew down funding from unspent grant and earmarked reserves to help fund expenditure. A full list of use of grants / earmarked reserves is included at Appendix 5.

57. Further, it is also proposed that for a number of areas, that unspent grant monies or other funding is carried forward to next financial year or onwards. Details of these carry forwards are contained at Appendix 6.

58. Appendix 7 provides a list of the Earmarked Reserves and Grant reserves at 31 March 2020.

59. It is important to recognise that some of the Earmarked Reserves are already committed or held for specific risk purposes. The County Council has managed its financial resources closely and on a net basis has contained most financial pressures in year and avoided depleting reserves by a significant effect.

Annual Governance Statement

60. The County Council is required, as part of its annual review of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements, to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20. This will be signed by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive with final approval by the Audit and Governance Committee in October 2020. The AGS is part of the Statement of Accounts and included at Appendix 1b. Any significant revision needed between now and October 2020 will be included in a future Cabinet report.

61. The AGS is drafted by senior officers who have lead roles in corporate governance. The evidence for the AGS comes from a variety of sources, including service plans, relevant lead officers with the Council, internal and external auditors and inspection agencies. The AGS highlights how the Council is addressing significant matters of governance both over the last year and in the coming year. It is also noted that the Internal Audit opinion remains moderate and no significant issues have been raised in the Annual report.

62. The current draft AGS will be revised in the light of any observations of Cabinet, the Audit and Governance committee and external audit.

63. Cabinet are asked at this stage to consider the AGS and make any comments

Summary Capital Outturn 2019/20

64. The County Council approved a capital programme of £339 million in January 2020, with a £160 million budget for 2019/20.

65. Capital expenditure outturn for 2019/20 is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Capital Summary Outturn 2019/20

	BUDGET	YEAR-END	VARIANCE	VARIANCE
	2019/20	OUTTURN	2019/20	2019/20
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£000	£000	£000	%
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	26,364	9,834	-16,530	-63%
OPEN FOR BUSINESS	64,051	45,452	-18,602	-29%
THE ENVIRONMENT	52,648	38,636	-14,009	-27%
HEALTH & WELLBEING	6,599	4,070	-2,529	-38%
EFFICIENCY & TRANSFORMATION	10,608	6,568	-4,040	-38%
TOTAL	160,270	104,560	-55,710	-35%

66. Progress has been made on a number of significant capital projects with the following major schemes being progressed or finalised during the year.

67. The Council's 2019/20 programme saw £105 million spent to deliver a wide range of capital works, including:

- £22.4 million A4440 Worcester Southern Link Road Phase 3 and 4
- £7.6 million Highways Structural Maintenance
- £6.9 million Worcestershire Parkway Railway Station
- £5.5 million Cutting Congestion Projects
- £2.7 million Pershore Northern Infrastructure
- £2.7 million A38 Bromsgrove
- £2.3 million Kidderminster Railway Station Improvement
- £2.3 million Social Care Case Management System Replacement
- £1.7 million Pavement Improvement Programme
- £1.6 million Kidderminster Churchfields

68. The capital programme expenditure will be financed in 2019/20 in the following ways: £56 million Government Grants, £31 million long term borrowing, £10 million capital receipts, £7 million Third Party Contributions, and around £1 million from the capital reserve / revenue budget contributions.

69. Overall, it is concluded that the forecast expenditure for the Capital Programme is within the budget limit. An exercise will be undertaken to establish the carry forward impact of schemes to future years.

70. Appendix 9 details the Capital Programme outturn for 2019/20 and estimates for future years.

Pension Fund Update

71. For 2019/20 there was a surplus resulted on the Pension Fund account (aside from the net investments returns) totalling £9.2 million a decrease of £7.6 million compared to 2018/19.

72. The value of the Fund's net assets decreased by £160.3 million from £2,795.3 million at 31 March 2019 to £2,635.0 million at 31 March 2020.

73. Income from contributions increased by 7% over the last year, (£87.5 million up from £81.8 million). Scheme membership has continued to grow and is now in excess of 63,600 people.

74. Net investment returns decreased by £249.3 million compared to 2018/19 which was mainly due to the impact of COVID-19 cushioned somewhat by the equity protection strategy. There was also some disinvestment from passively managed pooled funds to Infrastructure and property funds in line with the investment strategy.

75. The Pension Fund's Actuary has calculated that the Fund's assets of £1,952 million represented 75% of the Fund's past service liabilities of £2,606 million at the 31 March 2020 valuation date. This is an increase on the 69% funded position as a result of the 2013 valuation.

76. Whilst this net liability will change each year due to the volatility in share prices and changes in the assumptions used regarding financial risk and uncertainties, it remains consistent with the prudent long-term funding strategy agreed at the 2019 valuation of the Pension Fund to be effective from 1 April 2020 to ensure assets and liabilities are balanced over a 15-year period.

2020/21 Financial Implications - COVID-19 Pandemic

77. Government has issued two grants to local authorities both totalling £1.6 billion. From this the County Council has received £25.5 million in allocation to contribute towards its cost of response and recovery to COVID-19.

78. The Council is working with the CCG and NHS England to recover additional costs in ensuring prompt and safe discharges from hospital to enable effective care and treatment through the whole system. Our working understanding is that all such costs will be funded 100% from the NHS £1.3 billion allocation. To date we have claimed c. £[x] million from this fund.

79. In addition to this, £600 million Infection Control Fund monies were made available for Care Homes and processed via Councils under Government guidelines. The Council received £7.5 million, of which 75% will be directly distributed to all care homes in the County on a per beds basis. The remain 25% will be distributed in consultation with Public Health to support infection control and protection measures required and determined locally.

80. To date the Council anticipates to spend at least £15 million of that by the end of the first quarter and more thereafter. As such the full extent of the additional grant is expected to be spent by the end of the second quarter.

81. Looking forward, we will be refreshing our Medium-Term Financial Plan in light of the impact of COVID-19 and working with Central Government around funding arrangements. Our Corporate Plan will still remain a priority as it is now more important than ever to encourage a strong local economic recovery, support our partners in enabling service to support vulnerable adults and children and helping our residents and service users to return to a normal way of life.

82. As this work and the recovery period continues, updates around finances will be reported to future Cabinet meetings.

83. Excluding the impact of the pandemic, there are no significant variations on the Council's revenue budgets, however for the Council will continue to actively manage its spending and report progress to Cabinet throughout the financial year.

Legal Implications

84. Legal advice will be provided to support any changes in service delivery in accordance with the requirements of the Council's policies and procedures.

Financial Implications

85. Members are required under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the Chief Financial Officer's report when making decisions about the budget calculations for each financial year. This is undertaken through the approval of the annual budget in January/February each year.

86. Section 25 of the Act also covers budget monitoring and this process monitors the robustness of budgets, adequacy of reserves and the management of financial risk throughout the year. This Cabinet report highlights forecast variances arising from current financial performance and the possible impact of existing pressures on future expenditure so that appropriate action may be taken.

87. In discharging governance and monitoring roles, Members are asked to consider the issues arising and the potential impact on the budget as well as the financial risks arising.

88. The Council's procedures for budget monitoring is reinforced through close financial support to managers and services on an ongoing basis to ensure processes and controls are in place to enable tight financial control.

HR Implications

89. A number of existing and new proposed savings may impact on staff roles and responsibilities and where appropriate senior officers take advice from the Council's Human Resources team.

90. This will include undertaking consultations with staff, trade unions and any other affected body as appropriate.

Equality Duty Considerations

91. The Council will continue to have due regard to proactively addressing the three elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty in all relevant areas – in particular the planning and delivery of our services. The Council will continue to assess the equality impact of all relevant transformational change programmes and will ensure that Full Council has sufficient equalities assessment information to enable it to have due regard to the three elements of the Equality Duty when considering any changes to the budget. The Council will continue to ensure best practice is followed with regard to these requirements.

Risk Implications

92. The Cabinet report includes recommendations regarding the Council's financial outturn for 2019/20 and the carry forward of earmarked reserves and unspent grants.

93. If approved, there are normal risks regarding ensuring that appropriate qualifying expenditure is incurred, and that spending is within the cash limited for budgets. These risks are mitigation through the regular budget monitoring process.

Privacy and Public Health Impact Assessment

94. A Health Impact Assessment has been undertaken with regard to this report and recommendations relating to new spending decisions to understand the potential impact they can have on Public Health outcomes across the county area.

95. This report is mainly about confirming the forecast outturn financial position for the end of the financial year reflecting existing Cabinet decisions and policies and requesting approval for spending new specific grant monies with spending restrictions associate with these grants.

96. Taking this into account, it has been concluded that there are no other specific health impacts as a result of new decisions arising from this Cabinet report.

97. A similar assessment has been undertaken with regard to privacy/data protection and has confirmed that there is no impact anticipated as a result of this report.

Supporting Information (available electronically)

- **Appendix 1a** – Unaudited Annual Financial Report and Statement of Accounts 2019/20 Extract
- **Appendix 1b** – Draft Annual Governance Statement
- **Appendix 2** – Summary Financial Results 2019/20
- **Appendix 3** - Budget variances greater than £0.250 million
- **Appendix 4** - Capitalisation
- **Appendix 5** - Use of Grants/Reserves
- **Appendix 6** – Proposed Carry Forwards – Grants / Earmarked Reserves
- **Appendix 7** – Proposed Grants / Earmarked Reserves at 31/3/20
- **Appendix 8** - List of Savings
- **Appendix 9** – Capital Budget Financial Results 2019/20

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Chief Financial Officer) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Previous Cabinet Resources Reports

CABINET
25 JUNE 2020**REVIEW OF DELIVERY MODEL FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION PROVISION**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr M J Hart

Relevant Chief Officer

Director of Children's Services

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) notes the impact of Covid-19 on the review of Medical Education Provision;**
 - (b) approves the revised timetable for the development of the new delivery model of Medical Education Provision, including the Medical Education Service;**
 - (c) approves the continuation of the current Medical Education Service within the same functions and capacity for the academic year starting in September 2020; and**
 - (d) receives a further report to consider proposals and recommendations for the new delivery model of Medical Education Provision following design and co-production work.**

Background

2. On 30 January 2020 Cabinet received an initial report proposing a review of Medical Education Provision in Worcestershire. The report set out the full context and case for conducting a review into Medical Education Provision for Worcestershire children and young people. It made the following recommendations, which were approved by Cabinet:
 - A period of co-production and co-design between February and April 2020 to develop priorities and recommendations from which to redesign the current model of Medical Education Provision;
 - The submission of redesign proposals and recommendations for Cabinet to consider and approve on 4 June 2020;
 - The implementation of proposals and recommendations of a phased approach for any changes from September 2020 (subject to agreement by Cabinet).

3. Since the last report to Cabinet, the review of Medical Education Provision has been impacted upon by the Covid-19 pandemic. The opportunity to consult with parents, young people, schools and stakeholders in health and beyond has been severely limited and as such recommendations about the future of the provision and the Medical Education Service (due to be made to Cabinet in June 2020) will be delayed. A decision is now needed about a new timeline to complete the review and to implement recommendations from it. As a result of the impact of Covid-19 on the review, it is unlikely that full and substantive changes to the current service and wider system of provision for children with medical conditions and difficulties could be implemented before September 2021. This is in order to minimise the disruption and uncertainty which a significant change to provision in the middle of a school year would bring to children, young people, parents and staff. However, this would not prevent smaller changes and improvements being made where their benefit is likely to exceed any potential disruption caused. In the meantime, students would continue to benefit from the delivery and approach that has been in place in the Medical Education Team in recent years with an emphasis on the delivery of English, Maths, Science, Business Studies and PSHE through base provision and home tutoring where needed. This approach currently fulfils the Local Authority's duties in regard to Section 19 Education Act 1996 and would continue to do so during the 2020-21 academic year should the proposals for an extended timescale be agreed.

4. Since the last report to Cabinet a multi-agency steering group has been meeting to shape and progress the review including making plans for the engagement and inclusion of the following stakeholders:

- Children, young people and parents who currently access the service or have done previously;
- Staff and management of the Medical Education Service;
- Staff and management of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Alternative Education Providers and Special Schools;
- Staff and management in the NHS – including both commissioner and providers (particularly relevant to mental health);
- Staff and management in Worcestershire Children First Early Help services and Social Care.

5. The outbreak of Covid-19 and consequent changes to educational settings, family commitments and service delivery across partner agencies means that it has not been possible to hold planned meetings and workshops with these groups. These meetings were planned to understand the individual and collective priorities, aspirations, challenges and potential solutions the review should be engaging with. In lieu of these meetings WCF has been able to collect a small number of individual responses and contributions by e-mail from staff in the Medical Education Team, children, schools and parents, as well as conduct several phone interviews with parents. However, this has been at a slower pace than planned and has not been able to engage with the broad cross-section of stakeholders needed in a review of this importance. More work is needed in order to form an accurate, co-produced, inclusive and collectively owned set of recommendations for the future of the Medical Education Service, and the wider system of support it is part of. The availability of stakeholders for coproduction and consultation activity has likewise affected timescales for parallel reviews of the Mainstream Autism Bases and Exclusions and Alternative Provision highlighted to Cabinet in the January report.

6. At the present time there are 69 pupils who are either accessing provision with, or in the process of referral to, the Medical Education Team. The Covid-19 pandemic has necessitated changes to the delivery of support to children and young people. All pupils have had access to online learning, telephone subject support and safe and well checks from staff. Work packs, emails activities and online materials have been provided for Maths, English, Science, Business Studies and PSHE, providing continuity of curriculum for students. A resilience course for older students and additional activities focused on emotional health and wellbeing have been an integral part of the offer. Multiagency work and communication have continued throughout the pandemic ensuring children's needs are understood and acted upon. Where appropriate and based on robust risk assessment, vulnerable pupils have been able to attend bases in person.

Interim feedback from the review

7. Whilst the participation across stakeholders has been limited by the pandemic, there are some emerging themes from the analysis of what has been possible so far. A significant finding to note is that some children and young people receive provision from the Medical Education Team for longer periods of time than the target of 4 academic terms. Children and young people who access the Medical Education Team for longer durations are often those whose needs are more difficult to meet in mainstream schools. Considerable progress has been made in this regard and closer monitoring of this target, tracking of children's progress, along with a renewed emphasis on supporting reintegration into schools means this is less common than in the past, however there remains room for improvement in this regard.

- Approximately 80% of the children and young people who are being supported by the Medical Education Team need the support because of some form of mental health condition or anxiety, with the latter forming an increasingly large proportion of pupils.
- Feedback from parents has highlighted the perception that mainstream schools have been unable to meet the needs of their children and the Medical Education Team has been the first provision to do so. These negative perceptions of mainstream education can prove challenging when planning for reintegration from the Medical Education Team back into school.
- In some cases, children and young people's attendance has deteriorated for some time before they are referred to the Medical Education Service. Poor attendance over time is often linked to anxiety, sometimes linked to a diagnosis of autism.

8. Feedback from some children, young people and parents has also highlighted concerns about delays in and negative experience perceptions of the assessment of neurodevelopmental difficulties (Umbrella Pathway) and SEND assessment pathway, as well as perceptions of difficulties accessing support from mental health services

9. A common and positive perception amongst parents who have engaged with the review so far is that the staff at the Medical Education Team are "turning children's lives around", by getting them re-engaged in their education and helping them achieve consistent attendance and academic progress. In addition to these broader points about support available to children and young people with medical conditions and difficulties, the following points have emerged about the team itself:

- Staff working for the Medical Education Team are highly valued by children, young people and parents being credited with creating a caring and nurturing atmosphere. This is consistently increasing the engagement and attendance in education, as well as significantly changing the academic and emotional progress and achievement pupils are making.
- There is a perception that the current curriculum offer from the Medical Education Team is limited by factors such as staffing, physical sites from which provision is delivered and staffing structure in place.
- Feedback indicates a desire for increased partnership working and collaboration between the service, home schools and CAMHS to better integrate and coordinate support for children and families. Additionally, there is hope for increased capacity building and early intervention within mainstream schools to prevent children's difficulties escalating to the point where they are unable to attend.
- There is a lack of consistent understanding about the aims and remit of the Medical Education Team, who it is for, what it can offer and how it complements the support from other services and educational settings in regard to medical difficulties and conditions

Wider system review and improvements

10. An additional point, which is important to note for the review and subsequent recommendations concerning the Medical Education Team is that since the Cabinet meeting in January 2020, WCF has commenced a review into "Exclusions and Alternative Provision". The narrative emerging from the review of Medical Education Team has similarities to the feedback within alternative provision and pupil referral units. In both reviews early indications are that a lack of consistency in the delivery of preventative early intervention in schools can result in an escalation of difficulties with a commensurate impact on exclusion rates and attendance.

11. The evidence for this can be seen in the growing demand for places in the Medical Education Team as well as the growth in exclusions in the county. Between 2012/13 and 2017/18 the number of exclusions per year more than doubled and they have remained at the same level since then. This pattern is mirrored by the experiences in neighbouring authorities and at a national level, which remains subject of an ongoing government review into alternative education provision.

12. The review of Medical Education Team therefore will be coordinated and cognisant of the review into exclusions and alternative provision. There is a similar link and connection to the implementation of the SEND Written Statement of Action, particularly activity and actions being taken to embed the "Graduated Response" across the education system. The issues, opportunities, activity and ideas from these parallel areas of work will be included and integrated in the recommendations and proposals made to Cabinet about Medical Education Provision. This will be made possible by the extended timeline which is now proposed.

Proposed and revised timeline

13. In order to allow sufficient time for the coproduction and engagement with stake holders currently delayed by Covid-19, the change-over in school years, as well as other parallel reviews and work which have been referenced, a new timeline is proposed for Cabinet to consider and approve.

- June 2020 – Cabinet report.

- June to October 2020 – co-production and service re-design phase with stakeholders.
- October to December 2020 – Re-design proposals and recommendations report to Cabinet.
- January to April 2021 – Consultation (if agreed by Cabinet) on the re-design proposals and recommendations if significant changes to the service are identified in the review.
- January to July 2021 – Phased approach to implementation of minor improvements and changes (if agreed by Cabinet) to existing Medical Education Provision.
- May 2021 – Cabinet report for decision on preferred option(s) following consultation with MET staff and other stakeholders.
- September 2021 – Implementation of significant improvements and changes to the Medical Education model and provision.

14. The timeline for the implementation of any proposed changes would depend upon the recommendations proposed, the feedback received, and decisions made. It may also be subject to any ongoing disruption caused by Covid-19, including any changes to government directions and guidance. Should Cabinet agree recommendations and proposals presented to it in December 2020, it may be possible to implement some minor changes within the 2020/21 academic year. However, significant changes which impact on physical bases, budgets, staffing, eligibility, for instance will require a period of consultation.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

Legal implications

15. A further report will propose any redesign changes, if these are significant changes proposed which require consultation then approval to do so will be sought before any final decision, and appropriate HR and Legal advice will be required.

16. The Council has a duty to ensure arrangements for pupils who are unable to attend school because of their medical needs stems from Section 19 of the Education Act 1996, amplified in the Department for Education Statutory Guidance – Education for Children with health needs who cannot attend school
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school>.

17. Local authorities must:

- Arrange suitable full-time education (or as much education as the child's health condition allows) for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.

18. Local authorities should:

- Provide such education as soon as it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative. They should liaise with appropriate medical professionals to ensure minimal delay in arranging appropriate provision for the child

- Ensure that the education children receive is of good quality, as defined in the statutory guidance Alternative Provision (2013), allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible
- Address the needs of individual children in arranging provision. ‘Hard and fast’ rules are inappropriate: they may limit the offer of education to children with a given condition and prevent their access to the right level of educational support which they are well enough to receive. Strict rules that limit the offer of education a child receives may also breach statutory requirements.

Financial implications

19. The Medical Education Service is funded from a combination of Council funding (through the High Needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant), and contributions direct from schools where children and young people are registered to. The annual budget for the service is £775K (note the schools’ contribution is based on historical information from Babcock Prime).

Year	DSG Funding (£000)	Income from Schools (£000)	Total Funding for Service (£000)
2019/20	598	177	775

20. The implications of delaying the implementation of changes to the current model of provision (including changes to the budget and funding model) is that this budget would continue unchanged for the 2020/21 academic year. This applies particularly to the allocation from the Dedicated Schools Grant as income from schools is dependent on the number of children and young people being supported. It should be noted that from 1st June the service transferred to WCF as part of a wider transfer of all services from Babcock Prime.

21. A further report will make proposals and recommendations to Cabinet about the future of Medical Education Provision in the county. Where these might represent significant changes then approval will be sought from Cabinet to consult broadly on those changes before any final decision is presented to Cabinet. This will include appropriate HR and Legal advice where and when required.

Risk Implications

22. There has been a need to complete a review into Medical Education Team in order to improve the help and support available to children, young people, parents and schools where there are medical needs and difficulties affecting school attendance. The delay in progressing the review caused by Covid-19 will postpone substantive change in the provision and commensurate potential improvement in outcomes until the 2021/22 academic year. The importance of genuine input of stakeholders to the review and need to develop a co-produced and co-designed model of Medical Education Provision in the county means that this delay is unavoidable. Waiting a full academic year (2020-2021) before implementing any largescale changes impacting on staffing or the location of physical bases for delivery of the work of the Medical Education Team will avoid a significant negative impact on the academic, social and emotional progress of children and young people

being supported. This is particularly important given the vulnerability of many students caused by their anxiety and mental and physical health conditions.

Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments

23. A full Public Health Impact Screening and Assessment (if necessary) will be carried as part of the re-design phase.

24. A full Privacy and Data Impact Screening and Assessment (if necessary) will be carried out as part of the re-design phase.

25. A significant proportion of the children and young people accessing the service will have a disability (and may also have other, relevant Protected Characteristics). Any future service will potentially advance the three aims of the Public Sector Equality duty – in particular, promoting equality of opportunity. A comprehensive, multi-agency Equality Impact assessment will be conducted before proposals are submitted for Cabinet approval. The Assessment will include consideration of Public Health impact. Further assessment may be required during the re-design phase.

Supporting Information

- N/A

Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Director of Children's Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report.

- Cabinet Report: Medical Education Provision (30 January 2020)
- Alternative Provision Statutory guidance for local authorities (January 2013) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>
- Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Inspection outcome (March 2018) & Local Area SEND Written Statement of Action (August 2018) - http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20546/local_offer_news_and_updates/1614/send_inspection_and_peer_review/1
- Peer Review Report of MET Service (June 2018)
- Action Plan for MET bases following Safeguarding Audit in June 2018.

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CABINET
25 JUNE 2020**SCRUTINY REPORT: CARE WORK AS A CAREER**

Relevant Cabinet Member

Mr A I Hardman

Relevant Officer

Strategic Director for People

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care recommends that Cabinet:**
 - (a) receives the Scrutiny Report on Care Work as a Career, together with the response from the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care; and**
 - (b) notes the Scrutiny Report's findings and recommendations and adopts the response of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility as the way forward.**

Background

2. At its meeting on 14 February 2019, the Council agreed the following Motion:

"Council acknowledges and respects the 15,000 Worcestershire residents who work in the care industry. Many more residents are dependent upon their care. Council asks the Cabinet Member Responsible to consider ways in which their work can be celebrated and encouraged and how more people can consider care work as a viable career option."
3. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility (CMR) for Adult Social Care suggested a Scrutiny Task Group be established with the Terms of Reference set out below. The Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) agreed at its meeting on 28 March 2019 that a Scrutiny Task Group would be set up to scrutinise this issue, led by Councillor Liz Tucker. The Scrutiny Task Group commenced its work in October 2019.
4. The Terms of Reference for the scrutiny were to investigate:
 - How the Council can promote and develop care work as a career
 - How the existing care workforce can be better supported and celebrated

Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB)

7. The OSPB will consider the report at its meeting on 22 June 2020 and the final report will be circulated to Cabinet after that meeting.

Response of the Cabinet Member

8. The Scrutiny process provides for the relevant Cabinet Member with Responsibility to submit to the Cabinet a response to the Scrutiny Report's findings and recommendation to be considered alongside the Scrutiny Report and this will be circulated at the same time.

Supporting Information

The draft report is being considered at Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board on 22 June, the agenda for which is on the Council's website.

Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and minutes of OSPB meetings on 28 March 2019 and 22 June 2020 – available [here](#)