

16 June 2021**Agenda Item: 6****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE****PROGRESS ON THE COVID-19 CRISIS ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACTION
PLAN****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - a) Provide an update on the work the Council and its partners are undertaking in relation to the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan 2020-2022, as well as the impact of the various Government schemes to support businesses, being delivered through different routes including HMRC, the British Business Bank and the district authorities;
 - b) Allow Members to consider whether there are further actions required in relation to the progress on the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Plan.
 - c) Enable Members to request routine progress updates for future Committee dates.

Information

2. Launched in September 2020, the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Plan outlines an ambitious plan to supercharge the Nottinghamshire economy in the wake of COVID-19. Nottinghamshire County Council recognised its role in helping repair the immediate economic and social damage brought about by the pandemic. The Council instigated swift and decisive action to ensure a post COVID-19 Nottinghamshire will be more digital, greener and resilient to both current and forthcoming challenges.
3. The COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan contains an unprecedented package of measures to be delivered by partners locally and nationally. These measures will restore business, boost consumer confidence and provide support to those who have lost their jobs. This plan reflects local circumstances and priorities in different areas and ensures that the Council does not take a one size fits all attitude.
4. Nottinghamshire County Council continues to make rapid progress in achieving the aims set out in the Recovery Action Plan. Since the launch of the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan, over £11,403,000 of new money has been secured to help stimulate the economy and directly impact the residential and business community of Nottinghamshire. A progress update, based on the six themes of people, business, visitor economy, infrastructure, digital connectivity and place, is provided in **Appendix A**.

Action the Council and its Partners are Undertaking

5. Work has continued at pace in terms of the actions outlined in the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan. Key highlights include:
- A new Employment and Skills Brokerage Platform – the Council is in the first stages of procurement for a digital platform which will be the go-to-place for Nottinghamshire job seekers, returners, those looking to increase their skills and for employers looking to recruit
 - The new Digital Innovation Centre will benefit from £592,000 from the Getting Building Fund which will be used to comprehensively upgrade the existing digital IT infrastructure of the centre, boosting the productivity of the more than 40 businesses already on site, and creating new high-skilled jobs
 - The £4.3M Warm Homes Hub programme continues to be rolled out across the County. 43 households are in the pipeline and this programme has already helped residents save an estimated £90,000 in the last quarter
 - Since the launch of the employment and skills portal there have been 902 unique users of the portal
 - The transfer of Council Levy funds to its Apprenticeship Training Agency to support the employment of further apprenticeships, with a focus on supporting Looked After Children, Care Leavers and other vulnerable groups of young people and adults. Approved to date are 33 apprenticeships with a levy transfer value of £468,500 (a 45% increase since last reported to Members)
 - The Council's Business Advisers have continued to engage with Nottinghamshire businesses. 422 individual Nottinghamshire businesses have been the subject of intensive and on-going professional advice over the past 12 months. A further 403 Nottinghamshire businesses have participated in at least one of the webinars available via an extensive programme over the past 12 months gaining knowledge and direction from over 2900 hours of expert input.
 - The Council has been identified as a 'lead authority' in developing a submission for the UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF) which principally offers revenue funding towards projects addressing skills, local business development, challenges within communities and place and supporting people into employment. The government has identified the areas of Bassetlaw, Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood as 3 of 100 priority areas nationally for support.
 - **Appendix A** sets out in more detail the actions which have been undertaken and are underway.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. The Council recognises the need to be agile in its approach, to enable a switch from recovery to response mode and to respond to potential issues caused by the ending of Government support packages. The COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Action Plan is a 'live plan' with the Council responding to changing circumstances and the latest business intelligence. It is important that Members continue to monitor the situation, identify priorities and adapt so that Nottinghamshire thrives in the future.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

8. There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Economic Development and Asset Management Committee:

- 1) Requests regular updates at future Committees to ensure a high level of transparency around the Council's delivery of the COVID-19 crisis Economic Recovery Plan;
- 2) Requests that the Economic Recovery Plan be reviewed in the light of evolving economic and business needs, reporting back to a future meeting on emerging issues and proposals; and
- 3) Requests that a report be brought to the next Committee meeting analysing and providing additional insight into the impact of Government schemes to support businesses.

Adrian Smith
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Constitutional Comments (CEH 02/06/2021)

9. The report falls within the remit of the Economic Development and Asset Management Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (RWK 02/06/2021)

10. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Update on the economy and progress with the economic recovery action plan 2020-2022, Report to COVID-19 Resilience, Recovery and Renewal Committee, published on 25 January 2021 (Available [here](#))

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

- All