

3 November 2020

Agenda Item:

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

COVID-19: UPDATE REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Members on the impact of the Coronavirus crisis on the work of Nottinghamshire County Council, and the Council's response and recovery planning.

Information

2. This report is an update on Nottinghamshire County Council's response to the coronavirus emergency. Five programmes of work are managing the response to the emergency both corporately and with partners county-wide. These are: -
 - Support for Vulnerable Adults
 - Support for Vulnerable Children and Families including Schools
 - Community Support and Resilience
 - Support for Business and the Local Economy
 - Corporate Resilience

This report provides an update on activity within these programmes, excluding 'Support for Business and the Local Economy' which is covered under a separate item on this agenda.

Support for Vulnerable Adults

Support to Social Care Providers

3. The Adult Social Care and Public Health department continues to work closely with social care providers to ensure continuity of service to people who receive care and support in their own homes and in supported living, extra care facilities, residential and nursing home care. The Council has been successful in allocating the Adult Social Care Infection Control Fund to providers across the county in accordance with the national grant conditions; these were focused on measures to effectively reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission within and between care settings, including reducing the need for staff movements between homes/sites. This funding has now been extended until March 2021, with a total allocation of £9.6m for Nottinghamshire, which will be payable in two instalments up to the end of this year and must be used by the end of March 2021.
4. The Council is undertaking a self-assessment process to review and identify the readiness and sustainability of the care market in Nottinghamshire up to the end of March 2021. This is a requirement of the Department of Health and Social Care and is being co-ordinated through the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS). The intention is to provide a national and local picture of the state of the care market, and any areas of risk that need

attention and support as the country moves into winter whilst also dealing with an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. The self-assessment has to be completed by mid-October.

Adult Social Care Winter Plan

5. On 18th September the Government published the [Adult Social Care Winter Plan for 2020-2021](#). This presented the key elements of national support available for the social care sector for winter 2020 to 2021, as well as the main actions required of local authorities, NHS organisations and social care providers, including in the voluntary and community sector. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) described three overarching priorities for adult social care in the Plan:
 1. ensuring everyone who needs care or support can get high-quality, timely and safe care throughout the autumn and winter period
 2. protecting people who need care, support or safeguards, the social care workforce, and carers from infections including COVID-19
 3. making sure that people who need care, support or safeguards remain connected to essential services and their loved ones whilst protecting individuals from infections including COVID-19.
6. The document puts into practice the recommendations of the [Social Care Sector COVID-19 Support Taskforce](#) with requirements for the Council to deliver alongside our social care providers and partner organisations.
7. A few examples are:
 - local authorities must put in place their own winter plans, building on existing planning, including local outbreak plans, in the context of planning for the end of the transition period, and write to DHSC to confirm they have done this by 31 October 2020.
 - local authorities must distribute funding made available through the extension of the Infection Control Fund to the sector as quickly as possible, and report on how funding is being used, in line with the grant conditions (as already mentioned above)
 - local authority directors of public health should give a regular assessment of whether visiting care homes is likely to be appropriate within their local authority.
8. The department is currently developing its winter plan in response to the national requirements and this will be presented at a future meeting of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee.

Reshaping Services

9. The department has been focusing on recovery alongside the ongoing emergency response. The recent increase in cases across the county and the latest national guidance and restrictions have required some reconsideration of future plans. For example, the department has been developing a plan for a new day opportunities strategy, to be co-produced with people, family, carers, staff and partners, with a view to people having a meaningful day, and achieving their aspirations for the future. This work will still take place with the intention of having a strategy in place from March 2021, but alongside this the department will be working to develop a COVID-19 secure interim day service model for the continued period of social distancing guidelines. This will be the case across all of our services and support as we review and respond to the current situation.

Support for Vulnerable Children and Families including Schools

Early Years, School and College Settings

10. Nottinghamshire's publicly funded schools returned to school on the 1 September. Publicly funded schools have been required to make a daily attendance return to the Department for Education (DfE) which the Council is able to interrogate on a lagged basis. Initial attendance has compared positively with the national picture. As of 6th October 2020, 92.2% of children on the roll in the county were attending school compared with a national average of 90.2%.
11. Schools have continued to implement their new arrangements within school. A number of publicly funded schools had bubbles at home in isolation. This has clearly required schools to implement their blended learning strategies to ensure children at home have continued to access their education. A challenge for schools has been in relation to securing tests for members of staff who become symptomatic. Schools in Nottinghamshire have experienced the same challenges to secure tests for their staff. This has been practically addressed by the introduction of a booking process for key workers and their families to ensure they can continue to attend their place of work. Whilst there has been some improved access, securing a timely test and outcome remains a challenge for schools as the winter flu and cold season approaches.
12. Public Health has provided a flow chart of advice to support schools in making decisions as to when a test is required and when symptoms are clearly minor colds. This will be a key document to ensure that as many children as possible can access their education at school.
13. Ofsted is undertaking a series of school-based visits throughout the autumn term to identify emerging good practice during the pandemic. Four maintained schools have participated in pilot visits in September: St Giles Special School, All Saints Infants in Huthwaite, Carnarvon Primary School in Bingham and Brinsley Primary School. Feedback from these visits has been shared with all schools at the senior leaders' briefings led by Education, Learning and Skills. During the remainder of the term, all schools which are in an adverse Ofsted category nationally will be visited along with a sample of all schools including those judged to be outstanding. A letter will be published on the Ofsted web site of all such visits although these will not result in a change of judgment. At this time, Ofsted has indicated that formal inspections will not recommence until at least the spring term 2021 although it is likely that formal inspections could be further delayed.
14. An emerging challenge from schools continues to be in relation to budget. The cost of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has significantly increased. Increased cleaning hours are also being commissioned by most schools, which is adversely impacting on budgets. On 29 September, the Chairman of the Children and Young People's Committee formally wrote to all of Nottinghamshire's Conservative MPs raising concern about the additional COVID-19 costs for schools for which additional budget is unavailable. Whilst schools were able to claim back some costs for additional expenditure in the summer term 2020, to date, there appears to be no proposal nationally to repeat this in the autumn term.
15. Communications to parents and carers about children returning to school continues. This includes a back to school web page with frequently asked questions, information about travelling to school, reminders about keeping distances at school drop off and pick up times, advice about how to spot common colds versus COVID symptoms using a multi-channel approach including media, social media, email newsletters, web, and signage.

16. In the coming weeks, there will be further health and safety messages outside school sites, including lamppost wraps, as well as reminders about health and safety on school buses. The County Council team is also working with Nottingham City Council to try and coordinate messaging about safe tram and bus travel, including reminders about face coverings.
17. Education, Learning and Skills is leading and coordinating the roll out of the 'Wellbeing for Education Return', with the first webinars commencing on the 12 October 2020. These webinars will run at district level and will be followed up by further webinars and access to resources.
18. Since the start of school term 1017 (100%) Early Years settings were open for preschool children. We understand that many parents are still anxious about returning so take up of childcare provision remains low in some localities. A local campaign was launched last term to help reassure parents and encourage greater numbers to access their early years entitlements. This campaign is ongoing. 17,560 (95%) of 3- and 4-year olds are accessing their universal entitlements, 4,082 of 3- and 4-year olds from working households are accessing their additional 15 hours of childcare per week, and 1,558 (59%) of 2-year olds are accessing their 15 hours per week entitlement to early education. Increasing the take up of childcare, particularly for 2-year olds from low income households is an absolute priority.
19. Nottinghamshire provided discretionary funding for 2-, 3- and 4-year olds who were defined as 'vulnerable' to enable them to access 15 hours of childcare per week during the summer holidays to ensure that children were safe and were able to catch up on some of the early education they will have missed during lock down. 29 children known to social care accessed childcare during the summer, as well as 7 children with SEND.
20. Whilst we know that 10 Early Years settings have closed since March 2020, there does not appear to be a shortage of places so far. The updated Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 due to be presented to the Children and Young People's Committee in November will highlight any such challenges and the impact of COVID-19 on the childcare market.

Vulnerable Children, Young People and Families

21. Since schools have gone back, there has as anticipated been a rise in the number of MASH enquiries being received. Due to pressure in the MASH the service is currently operating an "urgents only by phone" service. This is enabling urgent calls to be handled in a timely manner. All non-urgent safeguarding concerns can continue to be referred to the MASH via the online referral form or through email. Feedback from social work teams indicates that cases being referred are more complex than was previously the case which may reflect children experiencing hidden harm during lockdown.
22. All families receiving early help or social work support continue to be risk-assessed to determine the level of support required. In line with government guidance, all families open to children's social care are now receiving some level of face to face contact with appropriate social distancing measures in place and PPE if deemed necessary through risk assessment. An audit of social work practice during the pandemic has been undertaken which has concluded that many families have had a positive experience of the use of technology to engage with them. The intention is to develop a blended approach moving forwards that combines safe, socially distant face to face visits, with additional contacts via Teams, WhatsApp or other methods.

23. The temporary changes to the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process, brought in by the Coronavirus Act, have now ceased. Since the beginning of September there has been a marked and unusual increase in requests for EHCPs, requests for elective home education, and contacts regarding placements at risk. This would indicate some concerns on the part of young people and families and educational settings about the ability of educational settings to meet need.
24. The Specialist Support Team (SST) has continued to provide hands on support to vulnerable children and families who were unable to access their usual provision. Although most services have re-opened, capacity remains reduced and SST continue to support those families who would otherwise be in crisis.
25. In respect of support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, for those families that receive a short break via a direct payment or provider service, the temporary offer of a £150 grant that was in lieu of these short break's hours has now come to an end. Short break assessments have continued throughout the period of restrictions. Provider capacity has reduced, which has had an impact on some families.
26. The Physical Disability Specialist Service (PDSS) has continued to ensure that children with physical disabilities have access to mainstream educational settings by providing the appropriate equipment, adaptations and staff training. Moving and Handling Training sessions for education staff have recommenced and now take place in smaller groups, in a COVID secure environment.
27. The Occupational Therapy team continue to use innovative ways to assess children and young people and the environment by using technology where possible. Home visits are taking place where there is no alternative e.g. to adjust equipment.
28. Twice weekly service coordination meetings continue to take place with colleagues from other children's services and education. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss those children young people and families most at risk and establish a coordinated response.

Community Support and Resilience

Community Support Hub

29. As reported to Policy Committee on 13th May 2020, Nottinghamshire Coronavirus Community Support Hub went live on 23rd March and is accessible over the phone, via the Council website or the My Notts app. The Hub provides a real-time online database, accessible to all partners, which enables residents in need of support to input their postcode and requirements and be 'served up' with a list of local groups and organisations able to meet those needs.
30. The number of hits to the Hub website reduced gradually over the summer from a peak of around 1,000 a day down to as low as about 40 a day by mid-September. However, by week commencing 28th September this had increased to over 60 a day and as of w/c 19th October this had risen to 160 a day – which is the highest amount since June.
31. As at 22nd October, 1,170 requests for support had been received since launching the second phase of the Hub, with the numbers of requests per day slowing as time has progressed. There are currently 277 voluntary groups, 140 individual volunteers, 78 charity

organisations, 20 online community and 240 businesses offering support which represents a reduction in previous numbers mainly driven by a reduction in the number of individuals.

32. As of 22nd October 2020, 36,404 people had been identified from NHS data as being extremely vulnerable and required shielding in the County. 19,451 had been in contact with the Government to indicate whether they required support or not, around a third of whom requested and received assistance from the Hub. For those who hadn't registered with the Shielded programme (16,953 as of 22nd October 2020), a local process was undertaken, complementing the national effort, to contact anyone in this group not known to the Council or its partners.
33. The Customer Services Centre have been a key component of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) response, and had significant volumes of activity between April and October:
- Handled 23,219 incoming call relating to COVID-19
6,663 of these relating directly to the community hub
 - Made 26,975 outgoing calls relating to emergency food support
from which 2,131 support needs were identified and resolved

Second wave of Infection

34. As the rates of infection have increased and a second wave has become a reality, Central Government has introduced a three-tier system and we are responding accordingly to our current situation and planning for further potential measures being introduced.
35. The first local outbreak was identified during the week commencing 10th August and the Hub worked proactively with colleagues in LRF organisations to ensure that they were supported and also the people affected. The learning from this was fed into the response to subsequent local outbreaks and has informed the review of resource readiness across Councils within the LRF and their ability to meet future support requirements in the community – which was used to provide an assurance to the HAG that the community cell could respond effectively to a second wave of infection.
36. As of October 22nd, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire are within the second tier of restrictions with an expectation that this will increase to tier-three in some areas over the coming days and weeks. Whilst it is not expected that the move to tier three would dramatically increase the number of requests for support it does make the re-introduction of shielding more likely.
37. The hub has been liaising with Central Government to understand what the expectations would be of LRF organisations in the event of vulnerable people being asked to shield again and guidance on this has now been issued and we are planning for this eventuality with LRF organisations.
38. In the meantime, we have built up a stock of frozen meals at County Enterprise Foods and put in place arrangements for an external supplier of food parcels as a contingency – it is worth noting that this at zero cost to Nottinghamshire County Council until activated. This would be used to provide interim support before people can be supported to find their own solution.
39. At the same time, we have also been considering our response to the wide range of potential presenting needs so that these can be developed to inform the planning of LRF partner

organisations. This work also includes consideration of how support requirements could be impacted by adverse weather through autumn and winter.

40. The hub will continue to monitor the situation and work with LRF partner organisations to plan to meet the support needs of people in their communities.

Nottinghamshire Community Fund

41. Nottinghamshire Community Fund was launched on 31st March 2020. The fund, managed by the Council's Communities Team, is available to local charities and community organisations that are delivering essential services to vulnerable residents impacted by COVID-19, including access to food, medicines and support with well-being. As of 22nd October 2020, 260 awards had been made with a total value of £695,201.

Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies

42. On 10th July the Authority was allocated £858,285 by government, in order to support people struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19. The funding had been allocated based on population weighted by a proxy measure of need and the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for the authority area.

43. The system to administer the funding has been established and as at 22nd October 2020 it has received 46 bids, with a value of £ 678k, of which 22 have been approved with a value of £ 246k.

Financial Resilience of the Community and Voluntary Sector

44. A task group with partners around the county was established to undertake an assessment of the financial resilience of the Community and Voluntary Sector in light of the COVID-19 emergency. The sector is a crucial partner in supporting communities through the coronavirus crisis and into the future and it is the intention that this piece of work will inform the support that will be required by the sector going forward.

45. A report providing an update of this work and details of a plan for the coming months was presented at a meeting of the Humanitarian Assistance Group (HAG) on 29th September and partner organisations have been asked to consider how we could collectively meet the financial implications.

Corporate Resilience

Workforce

46. An action plan has been developed by the Workforce Recovery Group to identify specific actions required to ensure the Council continues to be prepared and well placed for a continued effective response to the COVID-19 situation. The group which is chaired by the Service Director Customers, Governance and Employees, draws its membership from across the Council, and is the forum for developing the new Workforce Recovery and Resilience Strategy to replace the existing People Strategy. This will be considered at Personnel Committee in November.

47. We continue to be grateful for the fact that the council has not had any deaths in service due to COVID-19 notwithstanding the impact of bereavement and loss has had on certain colleagues over the last 6 months.
48. We continue to have regular dialogue with the recognised trade unions and the self- managed employee support groups to address specific workforce issues arising from the pandemic.
49. Personnel Committee considered a further report in September which again highlighted the positive impact of flexible working on workforce availability. Committee agreed a revised, refreshed Employee Health and Well Being Action Plan which highlights the range of support available for employees to access including counselling, financial advice and a range of additional measures to assist people maintain their resilience whilst at work.
50. Concerns have been expressed about the increase of COVID-19 cases going into the winter flu season. The current Public Health campaign to encourage employees to get vaccinated is supported by the recognised trade unions and further publicity to encourage people to access a flu injection is planned. The various departmental and corporate Risk Safety Emergency Management Groups and Board continue to meet to ensure the Council is well prepared for whatever the next phase of the COVID-19 outbreak brings.
51. Our existing learning and development package is kept under review and new information is added which provides further support for those continuing to work as they were or at home. Research will be undertaken to further understand what people value from the current situation and what they do not like and would want to change.
52. Advice and information have been continually updated on the Council's intranet to ensure employees and their managers are fully aware of the newly announced restrictions and how these may impact on our working lives. We continue to develop our suite of Frequently Asked Questions to maintain their currency and relevance.

Council Premises

53. The Property and Premises Recovery Group continues to meet weekly. The group includes officers from across the Council looking to guide and support the reoccupation of Council properties and their continued safe use during restrictions, both the central office estate and the operational portfolio. The group ensure that buildings are safe to use and compliant with Government guidelines with adaptations, social distancing measures and hygiene policies and regimes in place, and that a corporate approach is taken to ensure consistency.
54. The subgroup worked with Group Managers to identify staff who need to return to the office either for individual welfare reasons, or because they are unable to satisfactorily deliver their services working remotely and those staff were able to return to our COVID prepared offices in early August. A video was provided to help staff understand how the buildings will operate and what is expected of them as occupiers. The impact of social distancing is that only approximately 50% of workstations are available for use and the capacity of meeting spaces is similarly reduced. Reception areas remain closed to the public, who may only visit by appointment. All staff and visitors are required to sign in for test and trace purposes. The Council's nonpriority staff, which is the majority, continue to operate in their existing circumstances, which in most cases means working from home.
55. For the varied operational estate, guidance on reoccupation and continued compliant use continues to be provided to services to ensure consistency across the Council and compliance

with government guidance. Support is being provided from Property, Health and Safety, HR and ICT. Across all the estate as we enter the cooler time of year issues of natural and mechanical ventilation, air circulation and heating are concerns for all building managers and guidance and support is being provided.

Reopening of Services

56. In order to adhere to government guidance on social distancing and release Council resources to support COVID-19 priorities, many public-facing service areas have faced disruption or closure. The current status of these services is outlined in the table below.

Service	Status
Youth Services	<p>Youth work with the most vulnerable young people continues to be prioritised. Where needed the Youth Service will support young people within Children’s Social Care settings, including residential homes and in supporting placement stability.</p> <p>Young People’s Centres reopened universal provision in line with government guidelines during w/c 21st September. A blended approach has been taken in response to local needs which has seen youth workers delivering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two open access Youth Work sessions from their youth centre and two Outreach and Youth Work Intervention sessions in the local community per week. This will be reviewed October half-term, with an aim to return to four open access youth centre sessions as soon as possible. • Initially a maximum number of 15 young people are permitted into the Young People’s Centres. • In addition, we will continue to deliver Focused Youth Work Intervention sessions with small groups of young people who need additional targeted youth work support. <p>The Youth Service will remain responsive to an evolving situation, and as the circumstances and guidance change, we may need to refine our operating plans.</p>
Library Services	<p>All libraries are open providing browsing, borrowing, information and ICT services. Click and collect service is also available. Reduced opening hours are in place. Mobile library services resumed on 14th September 2020.</p>
Outdoor Education Services	<p>Outdoor education residential centres are currently closed for overnight stays. Plans are being developed to reopen these services when possible and in line with government guidelines.</p> <p>During the interim period the service is supporting young people within Children’s Social Care settings by offering young people adventurous activities and outdoor learning experiences.</p> <p>Schools will be able to go on day visits at our Centres from September. The team have also developed a new on-site programme for schools in the autumn term based on the popular Wow Days. These activities include the Wow activities and also Viking, Robin Hood and Stone Age themed days. The autumn</p>

	term will see the opening of the new climbing tower and high ropes elements at the Mill Adventure Base and an immersive Saxon and Viking Settlement at the Perlethorpe Centre.
School Swimming	Services recommenced 7 th September 2020, firstly to primary schools. Bridging Clubs and baby and parent sessions will recommence week commencing 2 nd November 2020 if appropriate.
Day Services	Day Services returned to offering some premises-based services at the end of August. Services are operating within government guidelines which significantly reduces the capacity in buildings. Therefore, our day services continue to offer a transitional service. This consists of a blended offer which can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 secure building-based services, presently zoned, for those who can socially distance. • Building based activities for those who are unable to socially distance • Outreach support in someone's home • Community activities • Virtual activities
Country Parks and green spaces	Car parks have reopened at all country parks. Visitor facilities have partially reopened with some restrictions still in place.
Children's Centres	All 17 main Children's Centre sites remained open during lock down with additional satellite buildings reopening following building adaptations and infection control measures being implemented. The centres provide family support on site and continue to host midwifery clinics. Face to face group sessions are currently on hold except for work with very small groups of parents and non-mobile babies. This includes a suspension of volunteer led stay and play sessions which parents are requesting. Other targeted Children's Centre services continue to be provided on the phone, virtually, in family homes or outdoors.
Recycling Centres	All 12 recycling centres in the county have reopened, with social distancing measures in place. A booking system continues to operate at West Bridgford Recycling Centre.
Registration Services	Prior to the beginning of June, all registration services were suspended except for the registration of still births and deaths (which could be completed by telephone). From 1 June, the government permitted the registration of births and appointments for notices of marriage. The resumption of civil marriages at registration offices and Approved Premises was approved from 4 July. Individual Citizenship Ceremonies began again in July and group ceremonies (with no guests) resumed in September.
Music Teaching	Physical services have been resumed in line with government guidance to schools and in liaison with individual schools. Virtual offer still available.

Inspire learning study programmes	Young people continue to be supported to complete vocational courses on site and remotely.
Inspire learning adult education programme	A range of online programmes are currently being provided. Some limited face to face teaching resumed in September following government guidance.
Archives	Appointment for physical visits available. Expanded online services available.

57. Previous reports have included an update on the status of Education Library Service, Bus Services, School Crossing Patrols and Highways Maintenance. These services are now fully operational, albeit with alternative working arrangements in place for the protection of residents and staff.

Other Options Considered

58. The nature of the Coronavirus emergency is such that the Council has reviewed its priorities and use of resources to address the most critical needs of Nottinghamshire's residents. The Council must also comply with relevant Government guidance and meet its statutory duties as required during the emergency.

Reason for Recommendations

59. To update members on the Council's ongoing response to the Coronavirus emergency.

Statutory and Policy Implications

60. 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

61. All Local Authorities are required by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to report their forecast financial impact of the COVID-19 emergency on a monthly basis. The most recent DELTA 6 submission from Nottinghamshire County Council identified a total forecast financial impact of £36.8m (net of additional specific grants) in the current financial year. This is a reduction from earlier submissions due to recent Government announcements that PPE will now be provided centrally for many establishments where NCC was anticipating bearing the costs and additional CCG funding.

62. The additional pressures on the 2020/21 budget are offset by the main £42.1m COVID-19 grant allocation received from Central Government, however it should be noted that there is likely to be ongoing pressure on NCC budgets as a result of COVID-19, including anticipated reductions in Council Tax and Business Rate income in future years. As such any COVID-19 funding not required in 2020/21 will be used to set up a provision for future year costs / lost income directly attributable to the pandemic.

63. In addition to the main COVID-19 grant, the Authority has also been allocated the following COVID-19 related grant funding from Central Government:

- £3.8m Test and Trace Service Support Grant. This grant provides support to Local Authorities in England towards mitigation and management costs against local outbreaks of COVID-19.
- £11.5m Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant. 75% of this grant provides support to adult social care providers to help reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission in and between care homes and was given directly to care homes. The remaining 25% of grant is being used to support wider workforce resilience to deliver infection control. The grant must be used to cover eligible expenditure incurred between 13 May 2020 and 23 September 2020.
- £9.6m Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant Round 2. 80% of this grant must be passed to care homes within the local authority's geographical area on a 'per beds' basis and CQC-regulated community care providers (domiciliary care, extra care and supported living) within the local authority's geographical area on a 'per user' basis. The other 20% of the funding must be used to support care providers to take additional steps to tackle the risk of COVID-19 infections but can be allocated at the local authority's discretion.
- £0.6m Additional Dedicated Home to School Transport Grant. This grant has been made available to ensure that there is sufficient transport capacity so that children can get to school safely and on time.
- £0.9m Emergency Assistance Grant. This discretionary grant is provided to be used from July onwards to meet immediate need and help those who are struggling to afford food and essentials due to COVID-19.

All of the above will be reflected in the forecast financial position reported to Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee on a monthly basis.

64. The Government have also announced a scheme that will help those Local Authorities that have lost income during the pandemic. The first claim has recently been completed and NCC has identified circa £1.2m which is now subject to confirmation from Government that it is eligible for reimbursement.

65. As noted above, the pro-forma submitted to the Government does not include other potentially significant future costs including falls in collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates (£10m) as well as impacts upon the realisation of capital receipts (£4m).

66. All of the above additional costs, lost income and grant funding, together with ongoing pressures and savings options, will be incorporated in to an updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which will be presented to a future Policy Committee meeting.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

67. The safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults is at the centre of decision making around operating models and reopening of services in Children's and Adults services and services continue to operate with the same standards of care.

Implications for Service Users

68. While there continue to be some disruptions to services through the Council's response to COVID-19, the aim has been to maintain the welfare and safety of all services users at all times.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That Members consider whether they require any further actions in relation to the issues contained within the report.
- 2) That Members agree to receive further updates at subsequent meetings.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Derek Higton, Service Director, Place and Communities, T: 0115 9773498

Constitutional Comments (AK 14/10/2020)

69. The report falls within the remit of Resilience, Recovery and Renewal Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (KRP 9/10/2020)

70. The financial implications are as set out in 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.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All