

**CABINET****11 SEPTEMBER 2020****REFERENCE REPORT FROM THE RESOURCES  
AND SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****A.6 TENDRING BACK TO BUSINESS PRIORITIES AND PROJECTS 2020/21**

(Report prepared by Ian Ford and Keith Durran)

**BACKGROUND****13 August 2020**

At the meeting of the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 August 2020 (Minute 74 refers) the Committee had before it a report of the Assistant Director of Governance regarding the development of 'Priorities and Projects' that was incorporated as part of the Council's Back to Business and Recovery Plan, and Performance Management framework for the Council for 2020/21 in advance of any decisions by Cabinet/Council on those matters. The report included an Appendix prepared by the Assistant Director of Finance which drew together the numerous proposals and concepts arising from a survey of businesses locally, from individual Councillors and from Officers to help the District to build back better following the economic and social impact locally of the lockdown associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Committee was invited to identify its collective view on the themes and activities that should be key strands of work to focus on helping the district recover and included restarting the local economy, keeping residents and visitors safe and harnessing the power of the voluntary sector to deliver much needed services and improve the quality of life locally.

The Committee formulated a proposed draft response to the Cabinet on this matter and agreed that it would be circulated to the Committee Members for confirmation. Subsequently, the Chairman (Councillor M E Stephenson) convened a special meeting of the Committee in order that the Committee could formally endorse its response.

**3 September 2020**

The Committee met on 3 September 2020 to review the outputs from the 13 August meeting and ensure that these had been accurately captured. These are set out at Appendix A to this report. The opportunity was also taken to look at what the Cabinet should be recommended to do next to help achieve a coherent and integrated response to the 'Back to Business' agenda locally. As the 3 September meeting was held after the publication of the Cabinet Agenda the Committee's formal response was circulated as soon as practicable.

The decisions concerning the Outturn 2020/21 (referred to in the report at A5 of this agenda) and the discussion around 'Back to Business' suggested to the Committee that a clear and deliverable action plan should be developed by the Cabinet taking in the range of proposals. These proposals now need to be assessed and the component parts examined to identify the various steps that are necessary to achieve them. The timing and financing of those proposals needs to be thoroughly worked through to avoid wasted energy and public funds. Initially, schemes and services that are already in place or were anyway going to be implemented in this timeframe may be better started or refocussed with minimal delay. This will ensure that the Council does not defer intervention while the range of proposals are worked on.

Through the work of the Committee it was considered that, as 'back to business' steps are developed they may themselves suggest related or associated steps are also taken. Such associated and related steps may help deliver enhanced benefits and maximise the deliverables that can be achieved through the 'back to business' agenda. To help encourage this approach it was felt that it would assist to theme the proposals. Through an agreed themed plan a more coherent approach can be encouraged. In developing the Action Plan, the themed approach at Appendix B was considered for recommendation to the Cabinet. This itself identified to the Committee that in many areas proposals will fit into more than one theme and thereby achieve advantage across those overlapping themes.

As the Committee saw it, the 'back to business' agenda was not intended to replace the Corporate Plan and so there was recognition that particular activities will be on-going to achieve that Plan and it is vital that this activity continues. Indeed, it was recognised that some of the more long term proposals arising from the 'Back to Business' discussion will fit well with delivery of the Corporate Plan goals.

#### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS TO CABINET FOLLOWING THE MEETING HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**The Resources and Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee response was that it:-**

- (a) confirms its decisions of 13 August 2020 in respect of the outputs from its discussion of 'Back to Business' at Appendix A to this report (and the Outturn 2020/21, as set out in report A5 for this meeting of Cabinet);**
- (b) recommends that the Cabinet approves the necessary work to assess the various 'Back to Business' proposals, proceeds to implement those schemes and services that can be speedily focussed on 'Back to Business', develops an Action Plan of assessed and costed proposals (based on short, medium and long-term measures) and sets about the delivery of that Action Plan.**
- (c) Further recommends to Cabinet that the themed approach to 'Back to Business' at Appendix B to this report be adopted.**
- (d) records its intention to monitor the development of the Action Plan referred to in (b) above and its delivery. This will include project management and performance (which itself will include success measures and milestones towards delivery) and to approve that the work programme for this Committee shall be prepared to provide for this.**

#### **PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET IN RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2020**

##### **Portfolio Holder Comments**

*"I would like to thank the RSOS Committee for their work on the back to business priorities and projects. I will certainly be looking at how many of these initiatives we can progress within the funds available. I would be keen to focus on the key business and resident support measures we can put in place given that we are not*

*yet clear about where in the Covid cycle we may be and so it is critical that there is longevity to the initiatives and that any spend is done wisely.*

*To this end Cabinet will focus on putting together an action and delivery plan to focus on short term actions, drawing from the suggestions from RSOS Committee and the other suggestions submitted by other Councillors.”*

**Recommendation to Cabinet**

That the RSOS Committee’s comments are taken into account as part of developing the Back to Business Action plan, which will include regular and timely updates being presented to the Committee as part of their important overview and scrutiny role in delivering against this key priority for the Council.