

RESOURCES AND SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 NOVEMBER 2020

Report Reference for this Committee: A.5

Key Decision Required:	Yes	In the Forward Plan:	Yes
------------------------	-----	----------------------	-----

CABINET

13 NOVEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A.4 BACK TO BUSINESS

(Report prepared by Richard Barrett, Mike Carran, Will Lodge and Laura Richardson)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

For Cabinet to adopt a Council wide plan to support the District's recovery from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and agree a number of short term actions in advance of a wider delivery plan being adopted.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Covid-19 has significantly changed the way we work and live our lives, as well as impacting on our national and local Tending economy. In its role as a community leader, the Council is committed to supporting the District's recovery towards a brighter future;
- This Back to Business process will be targeted at improvements to our environment/ quality of life and support for our residents, businesses and wider local economy to recover from the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The plan will also focus on the Council and its services adapting to the challenges of the pandemic and long term planning for how services will operate moving forward.
- Following Greater Essex moving into Tier 2 High Alert' level for Covid and the subsequent announcement of a national lockdown, this plan and impending delivery plan, is intended to complement the business support schemes provided through Government and Essex County Council. It will be a continually evolving agenda which will adapt to the challenges faced by our businesses and residents alike;
- This Back to Business plan sets out the Council's approach to supporting the District's recovery from Covid-19 and includes a number of short term projects (as set out in part 2 of this report), in advance of a wider action plan being brought forward to Cabinet. This agenda and the subsequent actions and projects brought forward are underpinned by the Council's Corporate Plan;
- It is recognised that a successful recovery will only be achieved through a collective approach, both within the Council's range of portfolios and with local businesses,

partners and stakeholders;

- To ensure the Council has sufficient resources to support the delivery of its range of Back to Business actions and projects, it is proposed that a dedicated resource will be provided to deliver this plan. This resource will be tasked with bringing forward a wider Back to Business delivery plan, with a number of deliverable projects and actions. This will reflect feedback from the Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the responses from members following the associated All Member Briefing and subsequent request from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

a) That Cabinet agrees the content of Council's 'Back to Business' agenda.

b) Subject to a) above, allocates £862,000 from the Back to Business budget and delegates the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Governance to do the following:

- Explore options to provide dedicated resources to manage the Council's Back to Business agenda.**
- Subject to a Project Initiation Document being approved by the Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Finance and Governance and appropriate procurement rules followed, explore options for the refurbishment of Clacton Skate Park.**
- Update the Council's procurement rules to ensure more of the Council's spending stays within the local economy.**
- Within the parameters of the Council's financial regulations, make arrangements for a framework to be developed to provide redundant Council IT equipment to disadvantaged young people.**
- Explore options to allocate additional funding towards local organisations providing mental health services to young people.**

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

This strategy will support a number of priorities in the Corporate Plan as set below:

- Support existing businesses
- More and better jobs
- Promote Tendring's tourism, cultural and heritage offers
- Develop and attract new businesses
- Maximise our coastal and seafront opportunities

Further to that, the following opportunities listed in the plan will be impacted upon by the strategy:

- Clear vision for economic growth and prosperity;
- Our coast;
- Tourism, culture and sport.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

In order to support the short term projects and actions set out in this report, the sum of £862,000 will be allocated from the Back to Business budget towards this agenda.

Furthermore, a dedicated resource will be set aside for the Council's Back to Business approach to ensure capacity is in place to deliver projects in a timely manner. A review of appropriate options and implementation will be delegated to the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Finance and Governance, to ensure timely delivery of the short term projects and actions, together with producing a full delivery plan for adoption by Cabinet.

In order to support the emerging action plan, Officers will develop an investment plan during 2020/21 which will be directly linked to the Council's budget and evolving financial position and supported by the reprioritisation of budgets / existing funding and/or as part of the long term forecast.

LEGAL

The proposals are within the Council's powers. The Request for allocation of budget will be in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework, as set out in Part 5 of the Council's Constitution.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Consideration has been given to the implications of the proposed decision in respect of the following and any significant issues are set out below.

Crime and Disorder / Equality and Diversity / Health Inequalities / Area or Ward affected / Consultation/Public Engagement.

Area or Ward Affected

The Council's Back to Business agenda impacts on the entire District.

Health Inequalities

Improving employment opportunities through growing the sector will positively impact on quality of life of local people.

Consultation/Public Engagement

All Members of the Council have been consulted on the Back to Business approach and the Resources and Services Committee have put forward a number of potential projects and actions. These will be considered through the process of formalising a full delivery plan for adoption.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

As set out in this report, it is proposed to establish a dedicated internal resource to undertake the following:

- a). Work with internal Council services to progress and monitor both the projects and actions set out in this report and those existing projects which will support the recovery. They will work with the team of Assistant Directors to bring forward the delivery of projects to include:

New Back to Business Actions and Projects:

- Develop plans for a heritage trail from Jaywick Sands to Holland Haven,

including Clacton town centre, to mark the town's 150th anniversary – paid for with lottery funding;

- Work with users to refurbish Clacton Skate Park;
- Reviewing our purchasing rules to see how we keep more of our spending in our local economy by using Tendring firms;
- We have applied for funding for two full-time employment and training advisors for a year, to help residents find sustainable jobs, work experience or training;
- Giving our redundant IT equipment to local groups and schools so disadvantaged children and young adults can do homework or home-learning study;
- Working with partners to find extra funding for the Digital Access Support Team, which gives people the knowledge and confidence to go online safely – particularly important as we have reduced contact due to Covid-19;
- Looking to set-up Covid secure 'quiet spaces' where children and young adults can study remotely if they cannot do so from home.

Alongside driving forward the projects above, the dedicated resource will also monitor the progression of existing Council projects which support the Back to Business agenda. These will include:

- Continued our national and international partnership work to reinvigorate plans to commemorate Mayflower 400 and welcome postponed visitor tours from the US, Holland and UK in 2021;
- Preparing to stage a 'Celebrate Tendring' initiative in 2021, including the Illuminate Festival and attracting high quality events such as cycling's Women's Tour and the British Rally Championship Corbeau Rally stage;
- Working with the Football Foundation (FF) and Essex Football Association to secure match funding for three new artificial grass pitches by 2022;
- Deliver with partners an art sculpture trail for Tendring in summer 2021; encouraging people to get active and visit local attractions and retailers;
- Moving forward with the existing 'Starlings' redevelopment project in Dovercourt to see it delivered in 2021 - supporting local businesses and improving public space.

b). To actively engage with local businesses, Town and Parish Councils and other stakeholders in relation to the Council's Back to Business agenda.

c). To bring forward a full delivery plan to support the District's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, which takes into account the suggestions of Council Members and the work of the Resources and Services Committee. This will also encompass other key projects to be brought forward together with our partners.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

None.

APPENDICES

None
