

Key Decision Required:	No	In the Forward Plan:	No
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CABINET

19 FEBRUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A.4 BACK TO BUSINESS DELIVERY PLAN

(Report prepared by Mike Carran & Richard Barrett)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

For Cabinet to adopt a Delivery Plan for their Back to Business agenda, to support the District's recovery from the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- To date the Council has processed vital grants to the value of around £38m to support the local economy, since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Building on a period of unprecedented engagement with local business, focus now turns to supporting them to flourish through a range of measures targeted at fuelling the wider economic recovery.
- Cabinet adopted the 'Back to Business' agenda at their meeting on 13 November 2021, which set out how the Council would work across its range of services and portfolios to support the local economy, Tending businesses and residents in recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Cabinet allocated £862,000 to the Back to Business agenda, to fund an action plan in support of this process, which is apportioned to the various projects in the attached plan (Appendix A).
- This Back to Business agenda not only targets interventions to support Tending businesses and our local economy, it also sets out a number of measures targeted at improvements to our environment/quality of life and support for residents in recovering from the challenges of the pandemic. The three areas of focus are as follows:
 - **STRIVE** (support for our businesses)
Throughout the pandemic the Council has been working hard preparing for how we can support our economy through the challenges it undoubtedly faces. We have updated our economic development strategy and are concentrating resources to support the local recovery, whilst recognising it is Tending's businesses that will deliver economic growth;
 - **THRIVE** (support for our residents)
Many residents of all ages have been adversely affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, whether through being furloughed, feeling isolated while shielding or being home-schooled during lockdown. We are looking at measures to support our residents through these difficult times, towards a positive future;

○ **LIVE** (pride in our District)

Alongside economic recovery, we will continue to focus on the importance of pride in where we live, celebrating our culture and heritage and improving quality of life. There has never been a more appropriate time to focus on all the things that make Tendring special.

- Due to the many uncertainties which remain after almost a year of national restrictions, a balance of the overall budget has been held in reserve and will be utilised for the Back to Business agenda as and when appropriate.
- To date £1.95m of external funding has been levered in to support the Back to Business approach. Further opportunities are actively being developed to increase monies levered in to support the District's recovery.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- a) That Cabinet agrees the content of the Council's 'Back to Business' delivery plan;**
- b) That where noted on the delivery plan, Cabinet delegates the approval of Project Initiation Documents (PID) to the appropriate Portfolio Holder;**
- c) If virements are required to realign the budget between projects as set out in Appendix A, this will be delegated to the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Finance and Governance in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder.**

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.

The Council's Back to Business agenda is one of the Council's top 10 Priority Actions for 2021/22.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

Finance and other resources

In order to support the projects listed in Appendix A, the sum of £862,000 has already been allocated from the Back to Business budget towards this agenda.

The Council has already dedicated project support for Back to Business, to ensure there is additional capacity in place for delivery. This is being funded from an alternative budget, so

ensure the finance assigned to this agenda, will be expended on delivery. Where Project Initiation Documents (PID) are required, these will be delegated to the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Corporate, Finance and Governance for approval.

To date around £1.95m in external funding has been attracted to the Back to Business agenda. Officers will actively look to lever in further funding to support this recover plan.

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

The Council has procured additional resources from the Back to Business budget which will 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.

Together with the approval of additional resources, a small number of projects were approved together with the Back to Business Agenda in November. Updates on those projects are listed below:

- a) Subject to a PID 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 - *A series of consultation meetings are taking place with the skate park users to define the project and a PID has been prepare for approval to proceed with the tender process.*
- b) Update the Council's procurement rules to ensure more of the Council's spending stays within the local economy – *a piece of work is being undertaken, to ensure a clear plan can be actioned and launched for 1 April 2021.*
- c) 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 - *over 90 devices have been identified for donating to the Essex Computers for Schools initiative, the value of which will be used to purchase new Chromebooks for children in the Tendring Area. The roll out of these should take place over the coming weeks.*

- d) Explore options to allocate additional funding towards local organisations providing mental health services to young people – *work is being undertaken to establish the most effective use of this money and it is anticipated it will be distributed by March 2021.*

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION

Back to Business Cabinet Report, 13 November 2020

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Back to Business Delivery Plan