

REPORT FOR DECISION



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| DECISION OF: | The Cabinet |
| DATE: | 2 September 2020 |
| SUBJECT: | Covid-19 Response and Recovery Update |
| REPORT FROM: | Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Growth; and Cabinet Member for Communities and Emergency Planning |
| CONTACT OFFICER: | Geoff Little, Chief Executive and Bury CCG Accountable Officer |
| TYPE OF DECISION: | Non Key Decision. |
| FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/STATUS: | This paper is within the public domain. |
| SUMMARY: | This report builds on previous reports to Cabinet; the latest being on 29 July 2020 and provides an update on the Council's response to and planning for recovery from Covid-19. |
| OPTIONS & RECOMMENDED OPTION | <p>Cabinet is asked to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the progress on GM and the Borough's response to the Covid-19 emergency. 2. Agree the walk-up testing sites at the Mosses Centre and Chesham, with further sites in Ramsbottom, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich; the locations of which to be delegated to the Director of Public Health, with all Councillors being notified. 3. Delegate decisions regarding longer term resourcing requirements to support test and tracing, to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for HR and Corporate Affairs and other relevant Cabinet Members as appropriate. |

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| | 4. Agree the business continuity arrangements in relation to Civic Halls, as described in section 3.9 of the report. |
| IMPLICATIONS: | |
| Corporate Aims/Policy Framework: | Do the proposals accord with the Policy Framework? Yes |
| Statement by the S151 Officer: Financial Implications and Risk Considerations: | <p>The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the council's financial position for the year and will continue to do so in future years. Government funding has been provided to support councils in managing the financial impact and further funding is expected to reflect the income losses suffered by Councils, albeit not at the full amount. This is likely to include the loss of income regarding the Civic Halls as set out in the report.</p> <p>The costs of the recovery and the impact of the loss of income are currently captured as part of the Council's monitoring position and will continue to be updated throughout the year. To help minimise the financial impact, the Council has agreed a set of principles and these were agreed by Cabinet in July 2020.</p> <p>The Council's medium term financial strategy is also being refreshed and updated to reflect the impact of Covid-19 and will be reported throughout the year as part of the development and implementation of the financial strategy.</p> |
| Equality/Diversity implications: | None in relation to this report. |
| Considered by Monitoring Officer: | <p>The Council is a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act and as such is at the core of the response to meet the Covid-19 emergency. The Council is subject to a full set of civil protection duties including putting in place emergency plans, business continuity and public information arrangements, all in cooperation with other local responders.</p> <p>A major incident was declared by Greater Manchester on 2 August 2020 to enable public services across the region to draw on extra resources, with a central command structure established to oversee the response.</p> <p>The Council also has duties and powers in relation to public service provision. It must</p> |

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| | <p>comply with the law and have regard to guidance issued by the government.</p> <p>At the present time a balance must be struck between those duties and powers and the need to comply with legislative restrictions connected with Covid-19 and its health and safety obligations. The report identifies those obligations and the actions being taken to address them.</p> <p>The current changes to lockdown require that strict measures are in place. A decision to keep Council venues to remain closed is a matter for the Council itself to decide upon. However, cancellation of events must be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the contractual arrangement in place and legal advice should be sought where required.</p> |
| Wards Affected: | All. |
| Scrutiny Interest: | Overview and Scrutiny. |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 29 July 2020, the Cabinet received an update on the Council's response, with partners, to the Covid-19 crisis. The report particularly focused on the recovery phase, with the launch of the ten point plan of immediate recovery priorities for the next six months, with the objectives of kick-starting the local economy, protecting the most vulnerable and strengthening resident confidence and engagement.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the progress of the pandemic in Bury, together with an outline of the actions underway as part of the recovery phase.

2.0 GREATER MANCHESTER

- 2.1 There has been significant developments in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic in Greater Manchester since the last report to Cabinet.
- 2.2 On the evening of 30 July 2020, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care announced new restrictions on households meeting each other in parts of northern England, including Greater Manchester, due to increasing levels of positive tests for Coronavirus infections.
- 2.3 In response, on 2 August 2020, Greater Manchester (GM) declared the position as a major incident in order to ensure that the region could call on all potential responders, from within GM and beyond, to collaborate to protect residents in Greater Manchester, building on the significant amount of inter-agency work already taking place across GM and within all Boroughs.

- 2.4 In common with other areas in Greater Manchester, numbers of new cases of Covid-19 in Bury have risen sharply. Numbers of new cases of Covid-19 per week doubled from the week ending 8 August to the week ending 15 August. The number of positive tests per 100,000 people in Bury is nearly three times the English average. Data indicates that transmission in large households and between households is a leading cause of this increase. It is among younger adults, particularly those aged 18-39, where the numbers are on the rise. The rise is not confined to one area or community and the new cases are spread out across the whole Borough, while the ethnicity of confirmed cases is roughly evenly split between people who identified as White, and people who identified as Pakistani.
- 2.5 Greater Manchester is a highly interconnected region. People from Bury travel across Greater Manchester for work and for leisure; consequently what happens in one part of Greater Manchester affects us all. It is therefore important that as well as being fast, our response to rising rates of Covid-19 must be closely co-ordinated with our neighbours in Greater Manchester.
- 2.6 In some of the GM districts the rates of Covid-19 have in recent weeks risen to levels that are greater than Bury and the increases in those places have been rapid. Bury is at risk of a similar very rapid increase; the objective is therefore to act quickly and in partnership with other parts of GM to reduce the rate of increase in new infections.
- 2.7 The objective across GM is to contain, suppress and reduce the transmission of Covid-19 across communities and protect people through targeted use of testing and contact tracing that is both timely and based on the epidemiology of our GM localities.
- 2.8 GM emergency response arrangements have been reviewed and new governance has been established to give the best possible platform to deliver the priorities for the next couple of months. A number of focused sub groups led by Chief Executives across GM are in place including testing and contact tracing, engagement, communication, containing the transmission, data and intelligence, humanitarian assistance and enforcement and compliance.

3.0 BURY RESPONSE

- 3.1 The Council and One Commissioning Organisation (OCO) continue to manage the ongoing response phase of the pandemic. This section of the report sets out the actions across a range of areas which contribute to the GM objective to suppress and reduce the transmission of Covid-19, with particular focus on local actions within Bury.

3.2 TESTING

- 3.2.1 Testing people for coronavirus is important in helping to both diagnose individuals and to understand how widely the virus has spread. Testing is essential if the UK's contact-tracing systems are to work effectively to help stop the virus spread and avoid nationwide lockdowns.

3.2.2 The Council and OCO are increasing testing provision across the Borough to make it easier for people to get tested locally through a range of measures:

1. A mobile swabbing team is already in place, which provides assistance to high-risk residential settings or individuals that are unable to self-swab or cannot travel to a testing site.
2. Postal self-swabbing kits are available for individuals together with access to drive-through sites via the national portal.
3. Courier swabs are sent to high-risk residential settings so that self-swabbing can be carried out in those settings.
4. The satellite drive-through unit which performs the swabbing of individuals through an appointment system at Waterfold Business Park will be expanded, to increase the numbers of people being tested.
5. Mass outbreak testing at settings using Mobile Testing Units (MTUs) will be deployed at sites across the Borough.

3.2.3 In response to public feedback, multiple walk-up sites across community locations are being put in place, which will increase access for individuals to be tested and these do not need to be pre-booked. The first of these sites at the Mosses Centre and Chesham will become operational week commencing 24th August. Site identification and preparation work for 5 further sites in Ramsbottom, Radcliffe, Whitefield and Prestwich is in progress.

3.2.4 The sites will be open at least 3-4 hours each day, 7 days per week until at least 31st March 2021. These sites will be staffed by trained staff from BARDOC plus an additional 30 marshals who will signpost and support people through the testing process. The 30 Marshalls are being sought through internal redeployment and through partner agencies.

3.2.5 Negotiations continue at a GM level for redeployment of National Testing Resources to localities to support expansion of testing.

3.3 **CONTACT TRACING**

3.3.1 Effective contact tracing is crucial in the response and it is vital that this is a shared endeavour between national, local government and local NHS services, making sure we are working in ways which make best use of all public services.

3.3.2 It has now been agreed that the national Test and Trace Service will become a more localised system with a dedicated team of contact tracers for local areas. Local and national teams will work as one to ensure that as many people as possible are reached by contact tracing. This approach has already been successfully used in Blackburn with Darwen, Luton and Leicester.

3.3.3 The dedicated teams of NHS Test and Trace contact tracers will focus their work on specific areas, alongside Bury's public health officials to provide a more tailored service. If the dedicated national team cannot make contact with a resident within a set period of time, the local public health officials can use the data provided by NHS Test and Trace to follow up. The local model will be via the Community Hubs in partnership with GM Fire and Rescue Service.

3.3.4 A significant amount of complex and detailed planning and preparation is necessary in order to mobilise the locally enhanced contact tracing model. Changes are required simultaneously at a local, GM and national level.

- 3.3.5 Significant progress has been made in making the locally required preparations. The minimum viable local staffing resources have been identified to launch the service however there are likely to be additional resource implications in order to provide the necessary 7 day a week service and to manage surge demand.
- 3.3.6 Informal advice has been provided that an initial national grant, followed by a medium term funding allocation is to be provided to local authorities. Further confirmation is awaited.

3.4 **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

- 3.4.1 The Council is proactively working with businesses by providing regulatory advice and support to ensure the safety of staff and customers so that Bury businesses stay Covid-19 secure. The approach in Bury to enforce the Government regulations has been a pragmatic one to initially engage, explain and educate; however, being clear that the Local Authority has wider powers to close down business and indoor and outdoor space, under new legislation, which came into effect on 18 July 2020, should the initial measures not be complied with.
- 3.4.2 A proactive system of assurance and prevention is being put in place targeted at higher risk businesses. A risk management framework has been developed and a collaborative GM approach is being developed for those businesses with premises in more than one Borough. Large scale workplace outbreaks have occurred in other parts of the country and lessons learnt are being incorporated into both our risk assessment and prevention work. For example business with a high proportion of low paid staff/ staff on zero hours contracts; the role of informal spaces such as canteens and smoking shelters in the spread of infection.
- 3.4.3 Licensing and Environmental Health Officers, in addition to the proactive engagement with businesses, have also dealt with complaints, in particular in relation to non-compliance with social distancing and businesses not taking down customer's details for contact tracing purposes. All complaints have been actioned and include a range of responses such as advice, reactive visits, engagement and warnings. Mystery shopping type visits have also been undertaken with formal follow-up visits where required.
- 3.4.4 Additional Environmental Health Officers are being sourced to provide more capacity for compliance and enforcement to ensure Covid-19 secure requirements are adhered to and to target higher risk businesses. This will enable an expansion of targeted enforcement such as mystery shoppers visiting pubs and restaurants to ensure they are complying and taking down customer's details and ensuring staff and customers are in a Covid-19 secure environment with appropriate social distancing measures in place.

3.5 **COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

- 3.5.1 Communication with residents and businesses is a key aspect of the response to the pandemic. While much of the guidance and messaging currently comes from central Government and Public Health England, the interpretation and the localisation of the main messaging has often been needed and this is particularly true now with local restrictions.

3.5.2 Our key messages to the public are:

- Bury needs to comply with the local restrictions in order to reduce the number of cases and to avoid a lockdown
- Our number of cases are rising. They may not be as high as neighbouring authorities but, as we saw in March, they can quickly increase
- This is a whole GM approach as the virus doesn't recognise boundaries and this will bring down the rate collectively
- The safe hygiene messages – wash your hands, wear a face covering, keep a safe distance – still apply
- You can no longer meet with people you don't live with:
 - o Inside private homes
 - o Inside public venues
 - o Or outside in private gardens

3.5.3 A range of channels are used for communicating including:

- Dedicated pages on our Council website.
- Proactive social media content including targeted Facebook adverts to reach specific geographical areas.
- Video messages.
- Posters for self-printing.
- Radio adverts on local stations.
- Digital campaign in the Bury Times.
- Community volunteers and veterans facilitating engagement at supermarkets, transport links and other areas of high footfall, using our approved script.
- Distributing flyers with community groups and via the hubs networks.
- Keeping well at home booklet for older people.

3.5.4 A weekly data release is now issued and has had a positive engagement rate based on the number of comments, shares, clicks and likes. A recent post had 28.6k views and 5.8k engagements.

3.5.5 Further targeted communication is planned through a campaign with GM for the 18-39 age group, together with an increase in community engagement work to support communities on how they can play their part in tackling the pandemic.

3.5.6 We are continuing and enhance and sustain well received communications work gained in the run up to Eid and with the Jewish Community. This includes engagement with local communities and translated materials. We are co-producing other assets based on what leaders of these communities tell us would work well e.g. short videos for sharing via closed WhatsApp groups.

3.5.7 Regular active engagement via the five neighbourhood community partnerships and the Faith Leader's Forum to both gain local insight to inform our approaches to managing Covid-19 and widen reach into communities is also taking place.

3.6 **SHIELDING**

3.6.1 Shielding is now paused and people can re-enter their local communities. Central Government support in the form of free food boxes has ended. In Bury we have the Covid-19 phone and text line remain open. We are not reporting any spikes or reductions in support requests, about the same as last 2 weeks when Shielding was in place, which suggests that some shielded people are still asking for support.

3.6.2 There are 141 shielded people in Bury that have reported to the National Shielding Centre that they still need food support. Hub staff are proactively contacting them to understand what their needs are and offer a solution from the following:

- Escorted shopping with a volunteer.
- A volunteer to continue shopping for them.
- Access via the Bury Directory to local shops who accept phone orders and deliver.
- Direct booking into a delivery slot at Tesco and Iceland.
- Food bank support with a referral to Citizens Advice Bureau.

3.6.3 Hubs are contacting the 800 volunteers to check their availability for shopping and pharmacy tasks etc. now that many have returned to work and we are upgrading the Hubs app to match volunteers to time slots when they are available. Bury Voluntary Community and Faith Alliance (VCFA) are still actively recruiting volunteers but new flow and availability has much reduced.

3.6.4 The Council can still access the NHS Volunteer Scheme and we are trying to encourage those volunteers to become Bury volunteers so that we can build local relations and use the Hubs app.

3.7 **SCHOOLS**

3.7.1 Being back in full-time education is extremely important for all children and young people, especially those with fewer advantages in life who have been at risk of falling behind due to the prolonged Covid-19 crisis. We are determined that all our schools and centres will re-open from the start of the Autumn Term.

3.7.2 Local plans and preparation between the Council and schools in Bury are well developed. The Council continues to review risk assessments, processes and systems to ensure individual schools can welcome pupils back safely in line with guidance by the Government and the necessary adjustments to curriculum and environments. These include consideration of zoning, bubbles, scenario planning and curriculum adjustments; building on the experience learned so far from our own scenario planning, on local practice, and with reference to good practice from elsewhere.

3.7.3 Weekly meetings are taking place with Advisory Heads, Unions and Associations, with school clusters, and with the Regional Schools Commissioner. Pastoral support to schools is also in place, together with regular briefings to parents and carers to support and reassure families that it is safe for all children and young people to come back to school.

3.7.4. A Children's Services communications strategy is supporting the regular dissemination of reliable positive messages to parents and our staff.

3.7.5 Bury, alongside Greater Manchester represented professional concerns on the announcement of the national A Level results. Central Government has now reverted to teacher and lecturer assessment grades to provide a fairer reflection of our young people's attainment in Bury. Detailed analysis of the results is awaited. GCSE results will now also be based on teacher assessment.

3.8 **EVENTS**

- 3.8.1 The Council has formed a Safety Advisory Group with full partnership representation including Emergency Services, to provide advice to individuals and organisations planning a public events or public gatherings. Risk management and safety of the public at an event remains the responsibility of the event organiser, but experience from other Local Authorities has shown that early consultation with professionals can significantly increase safety and speed up the planning process.
- 3.8.2 The role of the Group will be to re-iterate the latest national guidelines (including local conditions) and strengthen the emphasis on gathering contact details including ensuring Covid-19 risk assessments are in place where required. It is proposed that all events over the next few months will be considered by the Safety Advisory Group, escalating to the Local Outbreak Board as required.

3.9 **BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

- 3.9.1 Further to the update in the July Cabinet report outlining business continuity arrangements, a review of Civic Halls has taken place. Following the announcement from Government on 23 March 2020, the Longfield Suite, Prestwich; The Elizabethan Suite, Bury and Ramsbottom Civic Hall have been closed. Staff working in Civic Halls have been deployed to work in the Community Hubs, schools catering and cleaning and to support the Markets Team with social distancing and market operations.
- 3.9.2 The nature of the Civic Halls business makes it extremely difficult to comply with social distancing for events such as dancing, wellness classes, weddings, parties, meetings and conferences. The maximum number of people allowed to congregate is 30 and this will result in many events and activities being non-viable.
- 3.9.3 The Executive Director Operations has considered the options for this service over the next 6 months and recommends the temporary closure of the Longfield Suite, Prestwich; Ramsbottom Civic Hall and the Elizabethan Suite, Bury for a maximum of 4 months until January 2021, dependent upon operational and social distancing restrictions. This will allow the Civic Halls Team to find alternatives for events currently booked, allow for larger high profile events to consider alternative formats and allow for planning of a re-opening marketing and operational plan in the New Year.
- 3.9.4 Staff would continue to be deployed to work in the Community Hubs, schools catering and cleaning and to support the Markets Team with social distancing and market operations. The estimated full year net loss for all Civic venues is circa £530k, which includes the 3 months that the Civic Halls have been closed since March 2020.
- 3.9.5 A review of the closures on a venue by venue basis will commence during September, with a consideration to open from October 2020, if feasible, to ensure flexibility relating to the varying guidance.

4.0 RECOVERY

- 4.1 The ten point plan of immediate priorities agreed at July Cabinet frames Bury's response to the pandemic, capturing actions to be delivered in the next 6 months to support the Council's ability to respond to the ongoing pandemic and to build resilience in the Borough for both now and in the future. This section of the report provides an update on progress of the ten point plan.



4.2 Summer provision for our children

- 4.2.1 A programme of summer activity has been developed to engage our most vulnerable children, many of whom have not been in school since spring.
- 4.2.2 The Department for Children and Young People have taken on a greater co-ordination role in respect of activities available to ensure information is provided and directed to our more vulnerable families as well as supporting access.
- 4.2.3 Work continues with the third sector and partners to ensure all activities are uploaded onto the Council's Bury Directory, within our 'Safe 4 Summer' link, which is accessible to professionals, parents and carers. This website is being updated daily with new activities and the Council's practitioners are scanning activities to look at how they might direct and support families they are working with to appropriate links. Full details of summer provision for children and young people can be accessed here:
<https://theburydirectory.co.uk/services/safe4summer-online-activities>
- 4.2.4 Targeted youth provision continues and 245 young people have attended 184 sessions during July. One-to-one mentoring support sessions are in place, with 38 young people taking part during July. 1200 activity kits have been delivered to our most vulnerable children in Bury. In light of current heightened restrictions, the Youth Service is now doing additional detached work with young people alongside Greater Manchester Police and Early Break 2 x weekdays, Fridays and over the weekend to support messaging to young people who are not in groups.

4.3 No rough sleepers

- 4.3.1 A Bed Every Night Phase 3 began on 1st July 2020 to provide wrap around support provision in the Borough. This secures 15 beds until the end of the financial year. This is supplemented by a further 10 beds via Stepping Stones. These 10 are currently secured until 30th September 2020, with a Next Steps revenue funding bid being submitted on the 20 August 2020 to extend these until the end of March 2021, thus securing a total of 25 beds for supported emergency accommodation for our rough sleepers. Since the impact of Covid-19 over 30 rough sleepers have been successfully moved from our emergency accommodation into either supported interim accommodation or longer term dispersed move on accommodation with support.
- 4.3.2 Consideration has taken place on the prospectus for Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) funding which outlines the Government's aspiration for an increased National portfolio of properties for rough sleepers. In the first phase 2020/21 there is a total of £266m with a mix of capital and revenue funding available. Sites and properties with support are being considered in consultation with Six Town Housing, Great Places and other Social Housing providers in the Borough to support and align with a collaborative bid with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. A separate bid is also being submitted similar to each of the other GM Local Authorities to consider other longer term move on accommodation for capital funding. These bids are subject to approval by the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

4.4 The Bury opportunity guarantee

- 4.4.1 This priority centres on giving every Bury resident a guarantee that, through the Council Community Hubs and voluntary action co-ordinated by Bury Voluntary Community Faith Alliance (VCFA), they may access a personal opportunity to step towards recovery following Covid-19.
- 4.4.2 A Volunteering Strategy is being developed for the Borough, drawing upon the latest activity in Greater Manchester and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise accord, as well as building upon experiences of recent months in terms of volunteer recruitment, retainment and recognition.
- 4.4.3 The end of July saw the launch of the State of the Sector call for evidence. This is a partnership piece of research led by 10GM working alongside Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO), Bury VCFA, Stockport Council, Trafford Council and Wigan Council alongside Salford University. This will provide the Council with an independent assessment of the VCF sector in Bury with the deadline for evidence submission being the 25th September. Promotion of the survey will take place across Bury's networks during August and September to maximise local input.
- 4.4.4 Work continues on the Bury Equalities Review which was announced at Cabinet on 10th June this year, with the independent reviewer commencing interviews with community leaders following discussions with Council and CCG leadership. This is alongside desktop analysis of policies and strategic plans against the Equality Framework for Local Government and Equality Delivery System.

- 4.4.5 In relation to skills, an update including GMCA led analysis of the skills sector was presented to the Bury Health Employment and Skills Task Force (BHEAST), with the GMCA offering to facilitate a workshop discussion about the sector vacancies, skills and economic resilience. The data presented will also help determine the need to conduct/commission in order to set up a short, medium and long term plan for skills.
- 4.4.6 BHEAST are also working collaboratively to design a 'Youth Hub' in Bury to support young people to access multiple support channels. This is a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) nationwide initiative that seeks to work in partnership with local authorities and is aimed at Universal Credit customers aged 18- 24.
- 4.4.7 A GM Virtual Apprenticeship Week took place in August, highlighting a series of virtual events for young people and opportunities to engage with employers and training providers.

4.5 **Anti-poverty strategy refresh**

- 4.5.1 A Steering Group is being finalised to refresh the Council's anti-poverty strategy and deliver specific interventions for Bury residents. This will include extending the proactive work already underway through the Council's Revenue and Benefits Team to support residents to navigate the benefits system and access swift and appropriate financial support and also ensuring full uptake of the Healthy Start food voucher scheme during the summer holiday period.
- 4.5.2 Activity is underway to pull together data from across the system so that this can be considered in its totality so that interventions can be prioritised.

4.6 **Year of Culture**

- 4.6.1 The Council has now created a catalogue of the cultural offer across all arts organisations; freelancers and independent artists. Contact has been made with event organisers who have had their plans altered or cancelled as a result of Coronavirus. In the vast majority of cases activity has been postponed for 12 months, with organisers citing ongoing uncertainties over gatherings and the intent to do not dilute their event(s) as to the decision to not reschedule for later this year. In addition, by postponing in their entirety most events have been able to keep deposits, sponsorship and funding.
- 4.6.2 A Safety Advisory Group has been established including full partnership representation including Emergency Services. See section 3.8 of this report for more information.

4.7 **Health and care recovery**

- 4.7.1 The health and care recovery programme has been reframed to become a comprehensive system wide recovery and transformation programme, reporting to the System Board on which all health and care partner organisations sit. The recovery and transformation programme builds on substantial programmes of work on for example urgent care, planned care, and has been extended to include the health and care element of the borough wide recovery and transformation programme for childrens.

- 4.7.2 An additional block of the recovery and transformation programme, around 'community services' has been added. This block recognises the component parts of recovery and transformation for community health and care services, including primary care, community nursing, active case management, end of life care, and learning disabilities, and seeks to understand their interdependence. The community block is co-led by the OCO and LCO – ensuring a consistent and single perspective on transformation in the system.
- 4.7.3 The current focus of work, in addition to the recovery of services, is to test the validity of the financial savings programmes associated with each block of work in the light of the changed circumstances following the pandemic.
- 4.7.4 A particular focus will be the implications of the 'phase 3' NHS planning guidance issued w/c 3/8/20. The focus of the guidance is to charge NHS services with recovering services to up to 90 and 100% of pre-COVID levels, and develop winter planning arrangements.
- 4.7.5 The Business Growth Hub has developed a fully funded Mental Health & Wellbeing Resources Toolkit for businesses across Greater Manchester which is being promoted through Bury Means Business.

4.8 **Backing Bury businesses**

- 4.8.1 The Government awarded the Council £169k as part of the Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund. A range of initiatives are proposed, including the recruitment of a dedicated Small or Medium sized Enterprise (SME) Covid-19 business advisor to support Bury businesses on how to reopen and stay open safely; expanding advertisements of safety measures through high impact posters and within the Your Bury magazine that reaches 60,000 households, in addition to running SME Resilience Clinics to provide structured safe advice and guidance across the townships of the Borough.
- 4.8.2 Continuing our partnership working with ADAB, a key VCSE organisation in the Borough, a Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) business advisor is working with Bury businesses to provide advice, information and practical support to be Covid-19 secure, for example, supporting businesses to complete and implement risk assessments. This activity has predominantly been with barbers and take-away businesses. Using the Re-opening High Streets Safely Fund, the Council looks to expand this in two ways; firstly to develop a best practice real life example of a safe takeaway/restaurant scenario and secondly to fund a dedicated Orthodox Jewish Business Support Officer.
- 4.8.3 Meetings of both the Bury Employment, Health and Skills Task Force and Bury Business Leadership Group took place during August and groups were updated on the promotional activity that Bury Means Business has been conducting to promote additional regional and national measures including funding mentoring opportunities from expert businesses coaches through People Plus, the Eat out to Help Out Scheme and the Safely Reopening Your Workplace Toolkit produced by the Business Growth Hub.

4.9 **Working well**

- 4.9.1 Working Well referrals have reduced due to Covid-19 restrictions and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) staff are working at pace to prioritise the processing of claims. Over the course of the next 3 months all the Working Well suite of provision will again move to a position of priority.

- 4.9.2 Recent business engagement activity in the Borough has resulted in reaching a new cohort of customers for Working Well – Early Help and Enterprising You:
- Businesses that need support to remain in work or return to work have been referred to Working Well Early Hep.
 - Micro business including market traders have been referred to Enterprising You for small business support.
- 4.9.3 The Working Well Supportive Employment Service commenced on 1 August 2020, commissioned by the GMCA and co-designed by Bury and the other 9 local authorities to support residents with severe mental health illness, people with a learning disability and/or autism. This comprises an individual placement and support element of the service for people with severe mental illness, with referrals taken by telephone/videocall. There is an additional supported employment element of the service for people with a learning disability and/or autism, which has also started taking referrals from August.
- 4.9.4 Within the next month local communication and promotional material will be produced to showcase successes of the scheme in different neighbourhoods and enhance awareness across the broader VCSE sector.
- 4.10 **Economic recovery strategy**
- 4.10.1 Town Centre Recovery Boards have been established within each township in the Borough, and utilising the Re-opening High Streets Fund, bespoke local signage has been produced including billboard advertising across the Borough to encourage people to shop locally and maintain social distancing.
- 4.10.2 A session with Barclays, with whom Bury is part of their Thriving Local Economy Pilot took place in August, bringing together key colleagues from the Council, Bury Business Leadership Group with Barclays to discuss the impact of Covid-19 as part of planning for the next steps of the economic recovery strategy.
- 4.11 **Championing the Borough's key workers**
- 4.11.1 Proposals are being developed to maintain the campaign of thanks and recognition that has taken place in recent months, which has included Thank you Fridays, Team Bury thank you videos and the sharing of stories across all channels. We now have the challenge to retain high levels of engagement for the ongoing response and as such, we are refreshing our staff engagement plans, including an all-staff conference.
- 4.11.2 Bury Local Care Organisation (LCO) are circulating a "thankyou" to staff across all community based health and care services in the borough this week whilst Pennine Care are planning a 'Great big thank you' week in September to replace their annual staff awards.

4.11.3 The Council is supporting the Unison Covid-19 campaign as far as practicably possible to:

1. **Protect Care Workers Health** – Provide priority testing for care workers to limit the spread of disease to vulnerable patients and service users. Guarantee all essential training and personal protection equipment (PPE) to all frontline workers (e.g. goggles, masks, hand sanitisers, thermometers) in line with Public Health England guidance.

The Council will continue as it has been doing to fund additional PPE costs and provide PPE where this is not available. All of the Boroughs care providers currently report sufficient PPE and continue to use our supplies were they are let down by their own providers.

2. **Protect Care Workers Pay** – Ensure full normal pay for all those required by government guidance to self-isolate or who become ill because of COVID-19, in order to prevent unnecessary spread of infection. This includes all staff on zero-hour contracts, bank/relief contracts or multiple contracts.

The Council continues to support care providers to pay normal wage during illness or self-isolation, this is now a condition of the Infection Control Grant. Whilst contractual or legal mechanisms are not available to address this we continue to assertively encourage our providers to meet their obligations to their workforce. Monitored weekly currently 75% of our care providers are paying full wages in these circumstances, this is the highest in Greater Manchester, 3rd highest in the North West and 33rd highest in the whole of England; it continues to improve.

Since March, the Council has paid the direct payments or personal health budgets of personal assistants who have to self-isolate and it will continue to do so.

3. **Protect Care Workers Employment** – Ensure no-one is dismissed or laid-off for staying at home to care for themselves or their family. Absence due to Covid-19 should be excluded from absence management triggers.

The Council is not aware of any staff being dismissed or laid off due to having to care for themselves or their family. If a member of their household is ill with the virus the care worker must isolate for 14 days and in line with the requirements of the infection control grant is to be paid their normal wage.

4. **Protect Care Workers Families** – Carers leave on full-pay for workers caring for a dependent who has Covid-19 or for whom childcare is unavailable.

If a care worker has a child or dependent who has Covid-19 they must self-isolate for 14 days with their child or dependent and will be paid their normal wage, this is an obligation of the infection control grant.

The Council has made both school and nursery provision available to key workers throughout the pandemic and continues to do so. Child care has and remains available for all children in the Borough, except those with symptoms who must remain at home and be cared for by their parent or carer in line with Government guidance.

The Council has and will continue to support and protect our care workers in their role supporting our most frail and vulnerable residents during the pandemic. It will continue to work with care providers where evidence emerges that improvements in workforce protection are required and continue to support the sector, its workforce and the customers they care for.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Overall, the Council and partners have continued to oversee a significant and timely response to the pandemic as the situation has evolved. The response has benefited from the well-developed integration of local NHS and Local Government – Local Care Organisation (LCO) and One Commissioning Organisation, together with combined political and clinical leadership, which puts us at a significant advantage when supporting the people of Bury.

List of Background Papers:-

10 June 2020 and 29 July Cabinet reports.

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