

SCC Covid-19 Planning and Recovery Group

Approach and Terms of Reference – 27th April 2019

Summary

1. This paper details the SCC approach to recovery, the SCC Planning and Recovery Group purpose, objectives, governance structure and terms of reference, principles of recovery and a high-level timeline for recovery for use in planning.

Context

2. Staffordshire's emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic has been operational for eight weeks through the Staffordshire Resilience Forum's Strategic Response Coordinating Group (SCG), operationalised for the County Council through its Incident Management Team (IMT), taking direction from central government and addressing the immediate needs of residents and our workforce through changes to provision, systems and working practices.
3. Now that the emergency measures to maintain essential existing services and deliver new support during the spread of the pandemic have been and continue to be delivered, the focus needs to move to planning for recovery – recovery for our communities, the economy and our organisation.
4. This process will be formally triggered by the Chair of the SCG at an appropriate point and the Staffordshire Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) will be established. Most of the recovery, however, will be led by individual partner organisations and the County Council is establishing a Planning and Recovery Group (SCC PRG) to take this work forward.
5. It is acknowledged that response and recovery will run in parallel for a period before the SCC PRG is fully operational and that, dependent on the re-emergence of the virus over time, recovery may pause while the IMT readdresses emergency response.

Approach to Recovery

6. This is not recovery as we have previously known it. The Covid-19 pandemic is the biggest, longest, deepest peacetime emergency we have ever faced, and it is unlikely the world will ever be the same again – it may be similar, but not the same.

7. So, planning and delivering “recovery” will be different from other recoveries that we have managed. The virus may re-emerge as lockdown is eased and restrictions are lifted, possibly over a period of a year or more, and therefore there will be no straightforward handover from response to recovery. Flexibility will be required.
8. We need to start recovery by understanding the impact that this emergency has had on our communities, economy and organisation; the likely timescales for easing of government restrictions; the decisions that we have made during the emergency period and what these have meant for SCC; and the threats and opportunities that these have provided.
9. We will have organisational backlogs to manage , demand increases are expected in some areas, provider markets have been de-stabilised, the voluntary sector will be fragile, there will be unmet and changing vulnerabilities that will have emerged within our communities, and there is an extensive economic and business impact, with related human costs.
10. However, as an organisation we have become a more flexible and dynamic workforce by successfully employing agile working practices and digital solutions. Our internal and external collaborations and relationships have also improved. A culture of trust has been created through staff empowerment, support for and by our communities has accelerated and we have been able to share data and make intelligence-driven decisions.
11. There is now an opportunity to shape a different future, addressing our threats and building on the positive outcomes from this emergency. As we recover, we need to understand which of our activities that have been paused need to be reinstated and how best to do that, and which aspects of our emergency response we would want or need to continue with, to move both the council forward and meet the expectations of our communities.
12. We also recognise that there is a need to reset our five strategic priorities and four principles as we emerge from the emergency. We need to develop a revised strategic plan and MTFS process to address the impacts of Covid-19 on our strategies (digital, people, communities and climate), transformation programmes and organisation, and the reshaped vision of the future. This will be a year of transition as we move towards a reshaped future.

Governance

Planning and Recovery Purpose

13. To understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Staffordshire and to coordinate and assure the activities that will be required for the recovery of our communities, the economy and our organisation over the short, medium and long term, and to reset the council’s strategic plan and MTFS

process in light of the threats and opportunities which have emerged through the response to the emergency.

Planning and Recovery Group Objectives

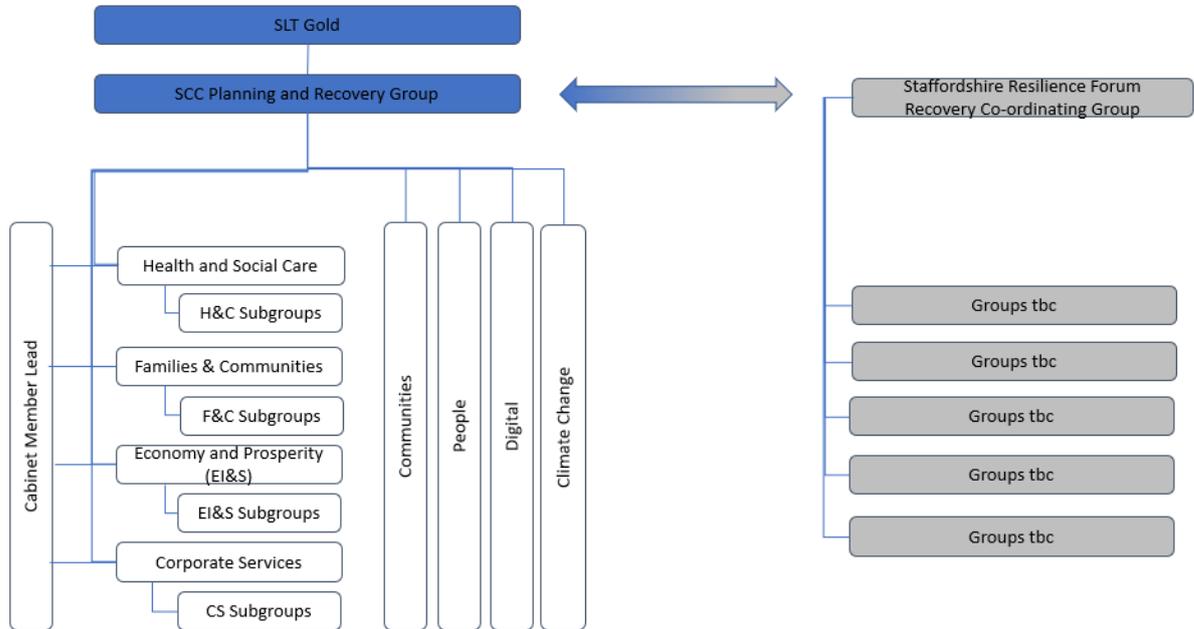
14. The proposed Planning and Recovery Group Objectives are:
- a. To ensure co-ordination, appropriate challenge, support and assurance to Staffordshire County Council's recovery process
 - b. To understand the likely progress of the Covid-19 pandemic in Staffordshire, linked to central government guidance on restriction of movement
 - c. To understand the potential timeline for removal of central government restrictions (including the likelihood of repeated imposition/removal cycles) over the next 18 months
 - d. To understand the potential impacts of Covid-19 on the county council services and provision; on the economy; and the council strategic priorities and principles
 - e. To ensure the coordinated and integrated development and implementation of plans to mitigate these impacts, as effectively and quickly as possible, including dissemination of any government funding for this purpose
 - f. To provide consistency through a set of principles for use by recovery subgroups in recovery planning and implementation, which acknowledges how the council has adapted and moved forward during the emergency response phase and recognising that some of the changes implemented have been beneficial to residents and the council
 - g. To understand the financial impacts to the Council from responding to and recovering from COVID-19 including direct expenditure, MTFS savings foregone and income lost due to impacts on the wider economy.

Governance Structure

15. It is acknowledged that the most appropriate people to lead individual pieces of recovery work are those in the business with existing expertise, who understand in detail the impact Covid-19 and the emergency response has had on their specific remits and responsibilities, and who already hold the relationships with external bodies and partners.
16. Given this, the potential timescale of the recovery period and the need to run recovery alongside business as usual activities, we propose to use existing governance structures to manage and interface with the recovery

process where possible. This will avoid duplication of activity and reporting, while ensuring an overarching coordinated, consistent and integrated approach to managing recovery.

17. The structure below is proposed:



18. Each Directorate SLT will form a number of subgroups to develop and implement recovery plans. These subgroups will report in to their own SLT for agreement, and the Recovery Lead for each Service Area SLT (or subgroup if appropriate) will bring plans, decisions, issues, risks and requests for finance and support to the SCC Planning and Recovery Group to ensure appropriate challenge, consistency and coordination across the council.

19. Likewise, those strands which are cross cutting will report into their respective Strategy Boards for agreement, before bringing plans, decisions, issues, risks and requests for finance to the SCC Planning and Recovery Group.

20. The SCC Planning and Recovery Group will initiate work which cuts across the council, for example, a policy on when and how staff safely return to work following removal of restrictions. Additionally, it will link to the Staffordshire Resilience Forum Recovery Coordinating group (SRF RCG), SLT Gold, and Cabinet, and be informed by shared learning from other local authorities.

Terms of Reference for SCC Planning and Recovery

21. The proposed high-level terms of reference are:

a. SCC Planning and Recovery Group

SCC Planning and Recovery Group

	Role	Name
Chair	SLT Lead	John Tradewell
Membership	Accountable Lead Deputy Accountable Lead Civil Contingencies Unit Service Area Recovery Leads/Subgroup Leads: H&SC F&C EIS Corporate People Communities Digital Climate change Finance Communications Public Health Insight SDM TSU Support	Janene Cox Andrew Donaldson Katie Weston Jo Cowcher, Andrew Jepps, Andrew Donaldson Deborah Ramsdale Anthony Hodge Tracy Thorley/Andrew Donaldson Sarah Getley Catherine Mann Andrew Donaldson Clive Thompson Rob Salmon Cristian Marcucci Claire McIver tbc Kerry Dove Laura Ballinger Deborah Sullivan, Sam Edwards
Frequency	Weekly 2 hours, initially	
Direction	From: SCC SLT Gold, SRF RCG	To: Recovery Leads, SRF RCG
Terms of Reference	To provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of delivery of subgroup recovery plans • Assessment of spend for approval in accordance with existing delegations for coordination and to support recovery delivery • Challenge to and endorsement of recovery plans and decisions • Coordination of SCC-wide recovery plans • Link to Staffordshire Resilience Forum • Resolution of issues, management of strategic risks • Link to Cabinet for information and direction 	

b. Recovery Subgroups

Recovery Subgroups

	Role	Name
Chair	Recovery Lead	tbc
Membership	Recovery Subgroup member Finance support HR support TSU support	tbc Existing Service Area Finance BP Existing Service Area HR BP tbc
Frequency	As required	
Direction	From: SA SLT, SCC PRG	To:
Terms of Reference	To provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of recovery plans for Subgroup • Key decision-making and management of the subgroup as agreed by SA SLT • Coordination of the delivery of subgroup plans • Visibility of plans, decisions, issues, risks to SCC PRG • Agreement with SA SLT to membership • Appropriate link to Members for information and direction 	

22. The scopes of the individual subgroups will need to be brought to the RPG to ensure no duplication of activity and they will be confirmed at the first meeting.

Principles for Recovery Planning

23. Staffordshire County Council is playing a pivotal role in minimising the impact of Covid-19 locally and being the key strategic place leader for Staffordshire. Our response to the incident has been unprecedented, and

all parts of the organisation have had to radically rethink how they operate, and in some cases transform rapidly.

24. Whilst the Covid-19 outbreak has brought many issues and threats to both the County Council and Staffordshire, how we have responded to the incident, has also brought many positive outcomes and opportunities. To support the organisation through recovery, a set of 'principles' have been drafted that will underpin the actions which we take to recover:

- a. Continue to **trust, empower** and **support** our workforce to remain **ambitious** in recognition of the flexibility demonstrated
- b. **Digital** working solutions – we retain and enhance digital solutions
- c. **Collaboration** both internally and externally
- d. Culture of **One Team** is embedded, making best use of **skills** and **resources**
- e. **Community** Support continues and is enhanced
- f. **Proactive** in managing demand and ensure collective responsibility for all vulnerability
- g. **Intelligence led** enhanced by positive **data** sharing
- h. Keep what is **best for the resident/citizen and business**
- i. Ensures **financial sustainability**

25. Continue to **trust, empower** and **support** our workforce to remain **ambitious** in recognition of the flexibility demonstrated

Staff have been empowered and trusted to make decisions, rapidly. Feedback from staff is positive concerning the flexibility and trust that they have been given. The pace in which some areas and staff have changed how they operate has been miraculous, and this evidences that it is possible to change quickly, and that we have the skills and confidence to tackle challenging issues.

26. **Digital** working solutions – we retain and enhance digital solutions

From all our workforce embracing full-time smart working, to utilising digital solutions to support and stay connected to our most vulnerable residents and families. During the response, we have supercharged delivering digital solutions. It is important we retain and build on this huge step forward in our digital journey.

27. **Collaboration** both internally and externally

New partnerships, and collaborations have been created during this response, with a shared common goal. Many, previous barriers to working in partnership have been overcome, and a commitment to doing the very best for the people of Staffordshire has been at the heart of this

28. Culture of **One Team** is embedded, making best use of **skills** and **resources**

Both IMT, and the response workstreams/cells have included a mix of skills, experience and hierarchy from across the organisation, leading to better results. Staff are finding this hugely positive and empowering – using their skills and expertise where it is most needed, not being restricted by job roles/titles, or where they sit in the organisation. Previous internal barriers and silos have been left behind, with a shared common goal, of doing the very best for the people of Staffordshire, overriding previous barriers and issues.

29. **Community** Support continues and is enhanced

In Staffordshire, as elsewhere, we have seen an upsurge in social action, and the establishment of new community groups. We have also seen otherwise hidden community groups, come to the fore. It is vital that we harness this social action during recovery and retain and build on as many community groups and individual goodwill as possible.

30. **Proactive** in managing demand and ensure collective responsibility for all vulnerability

Given the fast moving, universal nature of the outbreak, we have had to ensure that we not only consider demand ‘hitting our front door’, but also as a leader of place, ensure we minimise the impact of the outbreak on every Staffordshire resident. There is also a need to be pro-active in reducing future demand, both in respect of our front door, and for the whole public sector system.

31. **Intelligence led** enhanced by positive **data** sharing

The response has enabled us to effectively share data across the public sector, that previously we were unable to. We have also been able to set up performance frameworks quickly to monitor the response, by accepting that data does not need to be perfect but “good enough” to inform strategic decision making.

32. Keep what is **best for the resident/citizen** (remains at the heart of our thinking)

A key recurring theme, throughout the reflections on ‘how’ we have tackled the response is that there has been a shared common goal, both externally with partners, and internally amongst staff – doing the very best for the people of Staffordshire. This common goal has been key in breaking down previous barriers and silos. Harnessing and retaining will be a vital consideration during recovery.

33. Ensures **financial sustainability**

34. Immediate priorities

- a. Key priorities between 27th April and 15th May
 - Service response for some easing of current lockdown restrictions
 - Key Services (Waste, County Parks, Libraries)

- Buildings and public opening
- Workforce and WFH
- Transport
- Ensuring alignment across the Public Sector in Staffordshire
- Communications strategy for residents and businesses
- Research piece to help the organisation understand likely impacts and hidden vulnerabilities

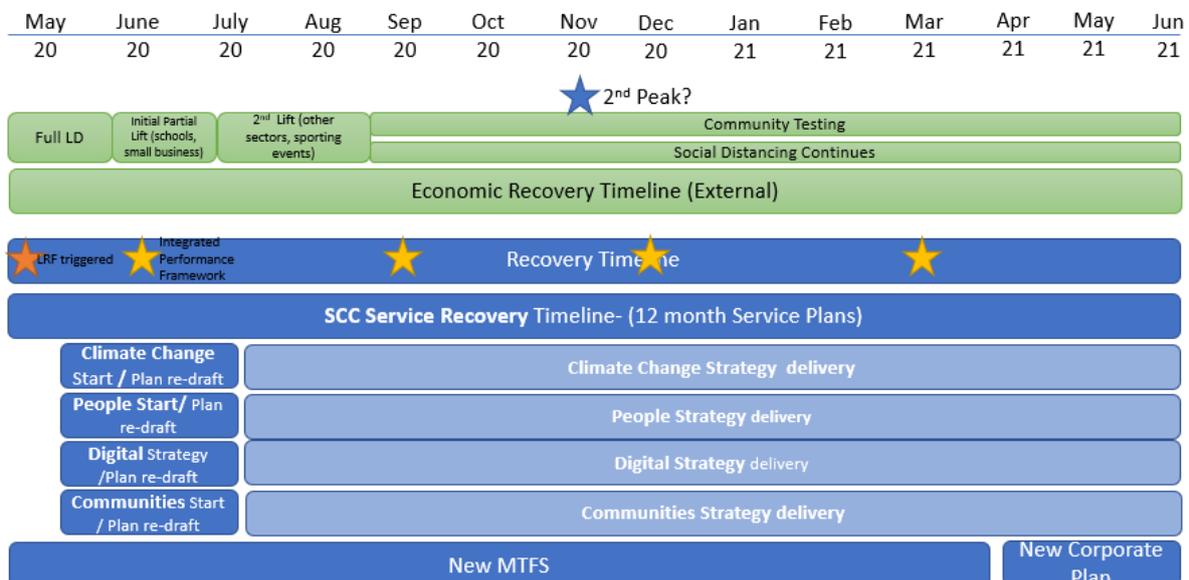
b. Service Leads required to:

- Vision and approach to recovery
- Outline what to stop, start, continue
- Any immediate investment, resource requirements
- High-level timeline / plan
- High-level risks

Timeline

35. Until a timeline for easing lockdown and lifting restrictions is released from national government, it will be difficult to plan for some aspects of recovery. The timeline shown below is considered most likely, and links to the high-level recovery approach.

Draft Timeline



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