



**Review of Council's  
Service Delivery Response  
to the First Wave of the  
COVID19 Pandemic**

# **Service Delivery Report**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The review was undertaken by a Panel of the Governance, Audit and Finance Board which included the following members:

Councillor Briggs (Lead Councillor)

Councillor J Branson

Councillor Patel

- 1.2 The Panel would like to record its gratitude to the Members and Officers of Havant Borough Council for making themselves available to meet with the Panel. Full details of contributors to this review may be found in the document entitled "Background Papers".

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 A copy of the presentation given at Councillors' briefings be sent to all Councillors

## **3.0 Conclusions**

- 3.1 The actions taken in respect of governance arrangements, finance and organisation development to meet the first wave of the pandemic was endorsed by the Panel;
- 3.2 The future recovery programme was endorsed by the; and
- 3.3 the level of communication following Councillor Briefings needs to be improved to ensure that all Councillors are aware of the content and message given at these briefings

## **4.0 Terms of Reference**

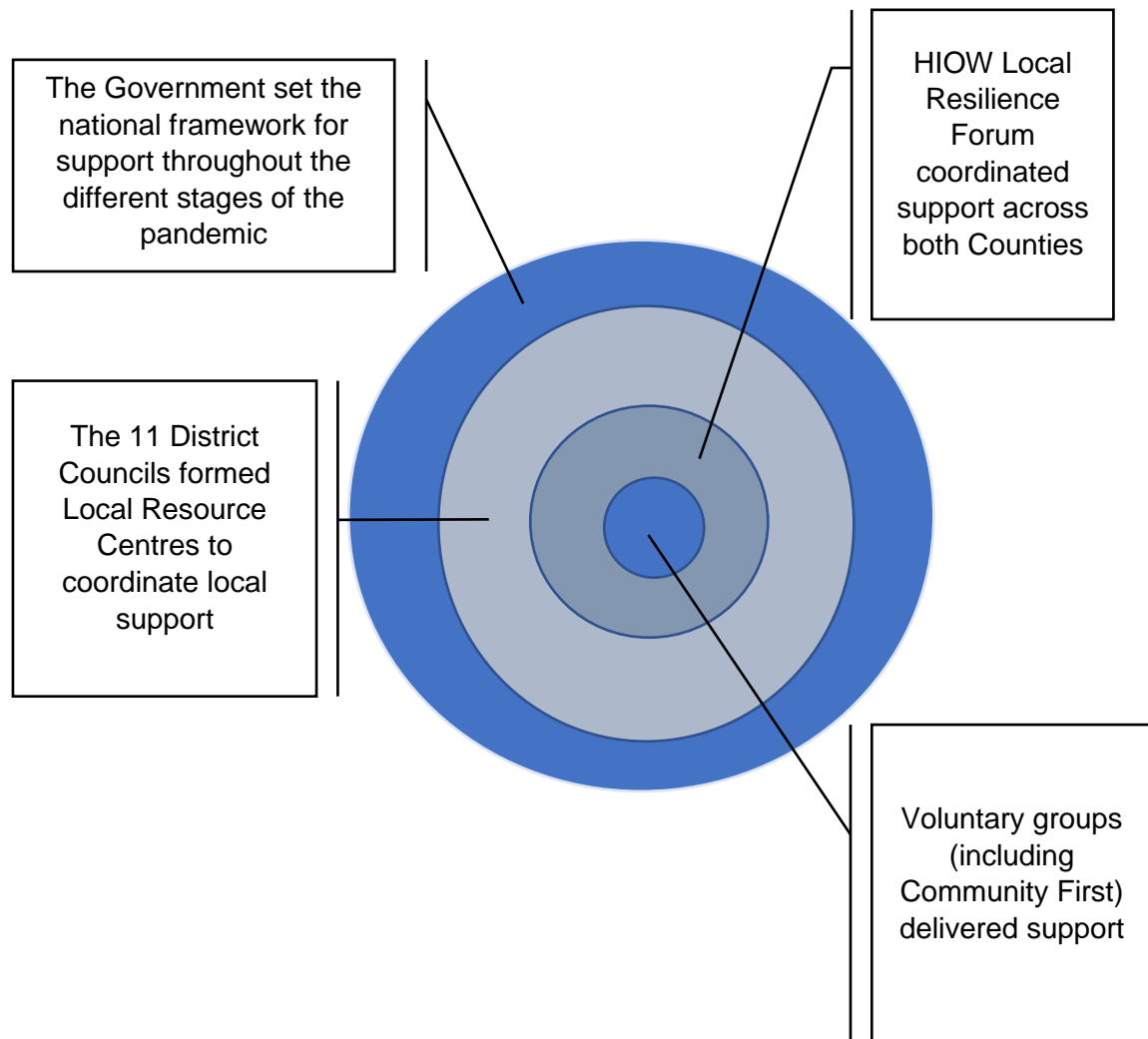
- 4.1 The objectives of the Panel were to:
- Review and test new approaches that have been developed in response to the pandemic.
  - Consider revised strategies and plans to deliver against current strategies and engage sub regional, regional and national partners to ensure the Council's voice is heard.
  - Ensure that all priority proposals and plans are affordable, sustainable and demonstrate best value.
- 4.2 The Panel focussed on the establishment of governance arrangements to facilitate the recovery of both Councils during and following the Covid-19 Pandemic

## 5.0 Background and Role of the Council

### 5.1 Formal Framework

#### 5.1.1 Role of this Council

5.1.2 The Panel acknowledged that this Council had a critical role to play supporting the community and local economy within the framework set out below.



## 5.2 Roles and Responsibilities Framework

### *National Level*

5.2.1 At a national level the lead responsibility for providing overall multi-agency command, control, and co-ordination throughout the different phases of the pandemic lay with COBRA with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and Public Health England (PHE) playing a key role.

## *County Level*

### Local Resilience Forum

5.2.2 A forum was established for Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Local Authorities to coordinate responses, disseminate learning, escalate issues and provide mutual aid to the most vulnerable residents.

5.2.3 The principle membership of the HIOW LRF were:

Basingstoke & Deane Council	NHS England South East (HTV)
Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service	NHS England South East (HTV)
East Hants District Council	Hampshire Constabulary
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	New Forest District Council
Eastleigh Borough Council	Hampshire County Council
Portsmouth City Council	Rushmoor Borough Council
Environment Agency	Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	Solent NHS Trust
Fareham Borough Council	Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Public Health England South East	Southampton City Council
Gosport Borough Council	Hart District Council
South Central Ambulance Service - NHS Foundation Trust	Havant Borough Council
Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust	Isle of Wight Council
Test Valley Borough Council	Wight NHS Trust University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust
Isle of Wight NHS Trust – Ambulance Service	Winchester City Council

5.2.4 For this emergency the Director of Public Health was the lead officer, the County Council was the lead authority and Rushmoor Borough Council took the lead role in feedback and communication between the LRCS and the County Council

5.2.5 A Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) led the response to the pandemic and strategic objectives were defined from the outset. The role of the SCG was to coordinate efforts, to ensure that all programmes of activity delivered by the HIOW LRF supported the overall strategic aims and to report up to central Government.

#### 5.2.6 The HLOW LRF was supported by:

- (a) The National Health Service
- (b) 11 Local Resource Centres (LRCs)- set up by district councils in partnership with local voluntary sector organisations, groups and local councils, drawing on local volunteers. These provided local support to access food, prescription collection and other forms of support
- (c) the County Council's Adult Health and Care Welfare Team where more complex needs and personal care requirements are identified. They may also draw on voluntary support from LRCs in addition to other care and support. They would pick up any issues related to adult safeguarding or domestic abuse and any urgent issues.
- (d) Community First - took a lead role behalf of the Community Voluntary Services (CVS) network and voluntary sector to support the LRF and LRCs. Full details of the roles of Community First is set out in the Background papers.

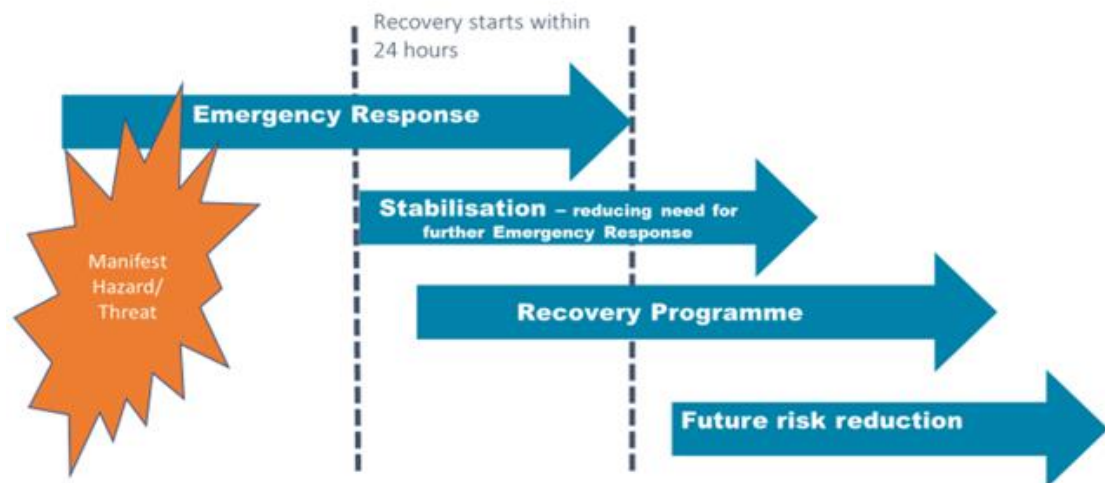
## 6.0 Immediate Response

- 6.1 The Governance, Command and Control processes that had been put in place were referred to and it was emphasised that the majority of the response had been down to co-operation, collaboration and true partnership work within the Council, across directorates and teams within the Council and the wider system. The governance structure and arrangements built upon the existing governance structures and sought to complement and reflect the already established governance structure of the multi- agency recovery led by the HLOW LRF
- 6.2 The Panel acknowledged that the most efficient and effective way to respond to the pandemic was for East Hampshire District Council and this Council to pool their resources and work together. Details of the work undertaken, and equipment provided to enable staff to work from home were reported. The Panel acknowledged that this approach provided a more agile service delivery and procedures which enabled both Councils to respond quickly to any issues that arose. The Panel also acknowledged the adaptability of the staff to take on new roles to meet new demands and to move away from working at an office to work from home without any deterioration on the standard of service.
- 6.3 The Corporate Risk Register had been reviewed in light of the Covid-19 situation and amended to help prioritise and coordinate the response, ensuring that focus was being dedicated to delaying the spread of the virus and protect the most vulnerable groups of people. The Plan was frequently reviewed and monitored.

- 6.4 The Panel expressed concern that although the Council has responded well to the pandemic, the level of communication to the Councillors could be improved. In particular, concern was raised that copies of presentations at Councillor Briefings were not circulated to all Councillors leaving those Councillors, who could not attend at a disadvantage.

## 7.0 Current Position

- 5.1 At the time of the review the Council was beginning the recovery programme



## 8.0 The Future

### 8.1 Recovery Programme

- 8.1.1 The Panel was advised that priority of the recovery programme was to ensure that the Council was fit for purpose, resilient and stable in order to move forward and be able to support the community and local economy.

### 8.2 Principles for Recovery

- 8.2.1 The Council had adopted the following principles during the first wave of the pandemic and when setting its recovery programme:

- To build upon joint working structure and methods with East Hampshire District Council adopted during the first wave of the pandemic.
- To continue to complement and reflect the already established governance structure of the multi- agency recovery led by the HIOW LRF
- The recovery should be an enabling and supportive process, which allowed individuals, families, and communities to attain a proper

level of functioning through the provision of information, specialist services and resources.

- Effective recovery required the establishment of planning and management arrangements.
- Recovery management arrangements were most effective when they recognised the complex, dynamic and protracted nature of recovery processes and the changing needs of affected individuals, families, and groups within the community over time.
- The management of recovery was best approached from a community development perspective. It was most effective when conducted at the local level with the active participation of the affected community and a strong reliance on local capacities and expertise.
- The private, voluntary and public sectors and wider community all had a crucial role to play in the recovery process.
- Recovery is best achieved where the recovery process begins from the moment the emergency begins.
- Recovery planning and management arrangements are most effective where they are supported by training programmes.
- The recovery process comprises the following overlapping activities:
  - Taking steps to prevent the escalation of the impacts of an emergency (e.g. restoring essential services following a disruption or securing evacuated premises).
  - Restoring the well-being of individuals, communities and the infrastructure which supports them
  - Exploiting opportunities afforded by emergencies – Establishing what happened, identifying where improvements could be made, and applying lessons learned. Taking steps to adapt systems, services and infrastructure affected by emergencies to meet future needs for example working from home arrangements, reducing the Council's carbon footprint, improved support networks for local communities.

### **8.3 Recovery and Reinvention board**

8.3.1 Central to the recovery programme was the establishment of a Recovery and Reinvention Board which:

- provided strategic steer and oversight for the Covid-19 recovery and reinvention programme for both Councils
- Provided visible and strong leadership during the recovery and reinvention phase
- Took advice from the working groups, decide the strategy and ensures implementation of the strategy
- Ensures the coordination and delivery of consistent messages to the public and social media

## **84 Key Themes of the Recovery Programme**

### **8.4.1 The Key themes of the recovery programme are:**

#### **(1) Organisation**

An essential part of the programme is to ensure that the Council recover to 100% operational and to assess the financial and legal implications of the programme for the Councils.

The work undertaken to ensure the financial sustainability of the Council was outlined to the Panel together with work undertaken to ensure that the organisation and constitutional framework would be in a position to enable the Council to deliver its recovery programme.

At the heart of recovery was the transformation programme which sought to transform the vision and work of the Council to meet the needs of the Borough. The Panel noted that there would be an impact on the range of services delivered and there would be costs savings. With regard to potential loss of staff, the Panel noted that it was hoped to avoid redundancies and the loss of experienced staff.

#### **(2) Community**

The recovery programme seeks to ensure that the Council can continue to fulfil its role in the Community by

- coordinating the provision of full range of assistance and
- supporting those directly or indirectly affected by the emergency.
- Enabling the community to have easy access to the required assistance.
- Coordinating the clean-up, repair or replacement of the physical infrastructure and clean-up of the natural environment to an agreed state.
- Reviewing the integrity of assets and prepare a strategy for reinstatement where required.

#### **(3) Economy**

The economy stream of the programme comprises everything associated with the recovery of the local economy for example regeneration, business, the housing market, retail, and tourism.

The aims of the recovery programme would be to:

- support businesses in the immediate term to enable them to keep solvent and where possible, remain operational
- help businesses to re-build, grow and where needed adapt to the new circumstances
- work to create a strong economy, create the best conditions for growth and support businesses to thrive



## **9.0 Challenges for the future**

### **9.1 Future Lockdowns**

- 9.1.1 It was anticipated that, the event of a second lockdown, the reaction time would be faster, focus more surgical. Lessons had been learnt during the first lockdown and actions had been taken to avoid the problems experienced in the first wave.
- 9.1.2 The Panel noted that the Council was now in a better place to map out cases and focus controls in a local sense rather than District or County level.

### **9.2 Information Technology (IT)**

- 9.2.1 The Panel was reassured that action was being taken to ensure that the Council's IT equipment and software could deliver the digital strategy which was a key part of the transformation programme

### **9.3 End of Furlough**

- 9.3.1 The Panel noted that it was anticipated that the end of the furlough scheme would have an impact with a rise in unemployment in the area. The Panel received details of projects to be undertaken by Economic Team and Councillor Bowerman to help provide support for residents who became unemployed following the end of the furlough scheme. The Panel was assured that these projects would complement each other.
- 9.3.2 The Panel was pleased to learn that the Council was looking into ways of renting space in its properties e.g. the Meridian Centre for start-up business that are likely to be generated in response to the rise of unemployment following the end of the furlough scheme.

### **9.4 Brexit**

- 9.4.1 The Panel noted that preparations for Brexit has helped the Council's response to this pandemic. The Panel was advised that the Council was in a good position to respond to the impact of Brexit.