


REPORT TO

BUDGET AND CORPORATE

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

18 June 2020

Subject:	COVID-19 Reset and Recovery Planning
Director:	David Stevens Chief Executive
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Contact Officer(s):	Sarah Sprung Senior Lead Officer

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board:

1. Notes the framework for reset and recovery, in particular the Governance Framework.
2. Notes the communication and engagement plan.
3. Considers how the Scrutiny function can support the COVID-19 reset and recovery framework.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To note the framework for reset and recovery agreed by the Emergency Committee on 27 May 2020 together with proposals for engagement activity.

- 1.2 The report provides the opportunity for the Board to consider how the Scrutiny function can support the COVID-19 reset and recovery framework.

2 IMPLICATIONS FOR VISION 2030

- 2.1 Recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic with our communities, stakeholders and partners will have a positive impact on all ambitions contained in the Vision.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

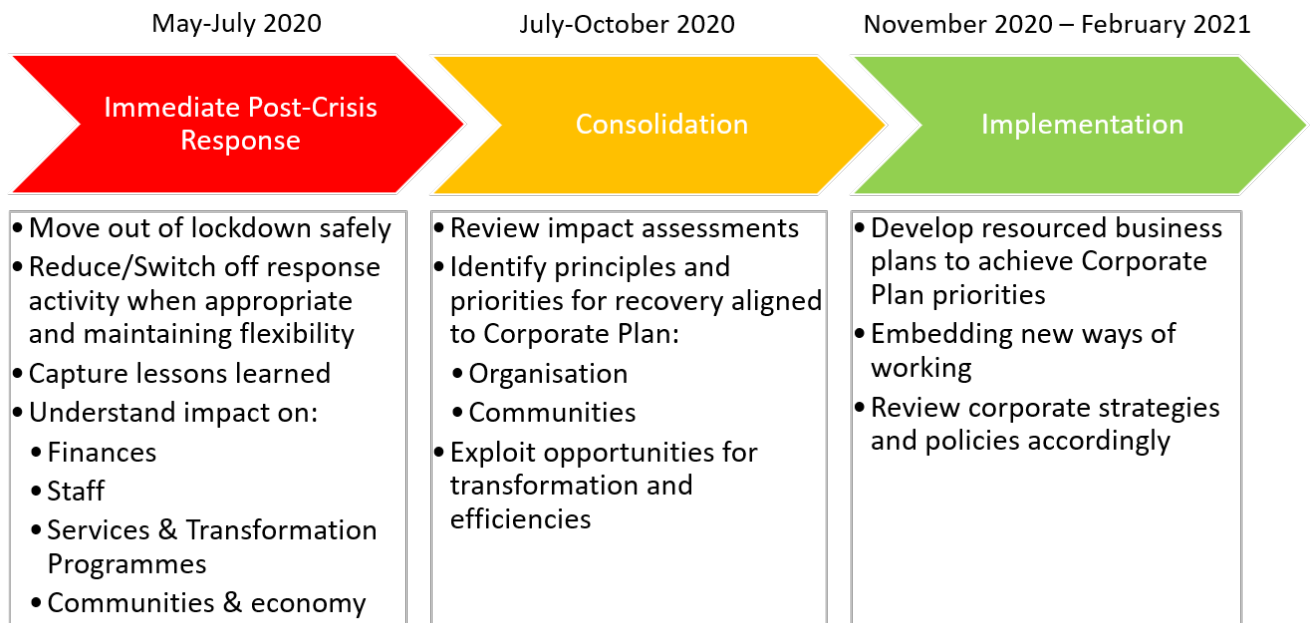
- 3.1 On 6 May 2020, the Emergency Committee approved the council's approach to the Recovery and Reset Plan. This set out the political, financial and social context within which the council will need to plan its recovery. The report stated that the development of the recovery plan will be driven by the strategic outcomes set out in Sandwell Council's Corporate Plan "Big Plans for a Great Place for the People of Sandwell", as agreed on 10 March 2020:



- 3.2 Furthermore, at its meeting on 27 May 2020 the Emergency Committee endorsed the proposed framework for reset and recovery. This report together with its associated appendices is attached at Appendix 1.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Work is underway to begin implementation of the phased roadmap of activity.



- 4.2 The first meeting of the Reset and Recovery Board, referred to in the governance framework detailed in the Emergency Committee report, took place on 4 June.
- 4.3 The Board's initial focus has been on the immediate post crisis response whilst also thinking ahead to ensure that the foundations laid will support us into the consolidation and implementation phases.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.1 To support the work of the Board and overall governance structure a comprehensive communication and engagement plan (attached at Appendix 2) has been developed with three clear objectives to ensure that staff and members:-
- are familiar with the strategic priorities in the Corporate Plan that will drive our reset and recovery and with our aim as a borough to deliver Vision 2030
 - understand the roadmap of activity to reset and recovery
 - ensure everyone is able to be a part of our journey.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The framework set out in the report considered and approved by the Emergency Committee will result in the development of plans to enable the organisation and the borough to recover from the impact of COVID-19, and therefore alternative options are not required at this stage. When developing approaches and determine specific activities, it will be

essential to consider alternative options to ensure the most appropriate way forward is agreed.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The development of the Reset and Recovery Plan will not require specific resources over and above those already allocated to corporate planning activities within the 2020/21 budget.
- 7.2 Integral to the approach is the understanding of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the council's budget and medium-term financial strategy. This will influence all reset and recovery activity and is embedded in the Working Principles set out in the report to Emergency Committee. Specific implications on our strategic resources will be identified as part of the budget and business plans that will be developed as a result of the approach set out in the report.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Transparency in decision making and accountability for delivery of the Reset and Recovery Plan will be key to its success. Governance will feed into the existing democratic arrangements and develop over time as more functions come back online. Links to regional activity will be key to the recovery of the council and borough, working in partnership with others, sharing intelligence and maximising the opportunities for Sandwell as whole.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no specific activity is required on the framework set out in this report. However, the impact assessments of COVID-19 carried out as part of this framework will highlight if any specific groups have been impacted more than others. This intelligence will drive priorities and activity within the Reset and Recovery Plan.
- 9.2 Throughout the development of the Reset and Recovery Plan, equality impact assessments will be conducted on specific proposals at the appropriate time.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 Any information used to compile this report is subject to information governance legislation and is managed in accordance with the council's policies and protocols. A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not required.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 There is no requirement to carry out a Crime and Disorder and Risk Assessment.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

12.1 The information contained within the appendices associated with this report will be incorporated into specific plans developed as a result of this framework.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

13.1 The immediate impact of COVID-19 on the health and wellbeing of both Sandwell residents and council staff will be captured through the impact assessments that will be conducted as part of the reset and recovery framework. These impact assessments will identify priorities for action that will be incorporated into the Reset and Recovery Plan. The longer-term impacts will not be understood for some time, and it will be important to continue to update our impact assessments throughout the planning period to ensure our activity addresses the key issues.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

14.1 The restart of services and the return of services to operating from the council estate requires a co-ordinated and planned approach to ensure staff and service users are as safe as possible. Risk assessments and appropriate mitigations will need to be in place before these services are 'switched on'. Work is underway to prepare our buildings for returning staff.

14.2 Throughout the response phase of the pandemic, a high proportion of staff have successfully operated remotely working at home. We are capturing the lessons from staff throughout this period to understand what works and how to address barriers that arise. This intelligence will be incorporated into our plans for a future flexible workforce.

14.3 As part of the development of the Reset and Recovery Plan and in response to increased financial pressures on council budgets, we will need to review the council's corporate estate to rationalise costs and ensure it accommodates the future needs of a more flexible workforce.

15 **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 15.1 Whilst Scrutiny's comments and suggestions on the overall reset and recovery planning are welcomed, it would be particularly useful to hear views on how the scrutiny function can support the reset and recovery framework. We need to ensure that our whole process for reset and recovery is open and transparent.
- 15.2 Our reset and recovery journey is reliant on having insight and intelligence from across our organisation, and beyond, to ensure we make the right decisions for the people of Sandwell. The planned engagement activity will help ensure that members, stakeholders, partners, the public are involved as appropriate and necessary.
- 15.3 The Council's Scrutiny function will help ensure accountability and that Scrutiny resources are used effectively and add value to our processes/approach..
- 15.4 Whilst it would seem appropriate for Budget and Scrutiny Management Board to retain oversight, focusing on finance, governance and engagement, the Centre for Public Scrutiny has suggested that other key areas of focus relate to health and social care and communities.

16 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Big Plans for a Great Place – Sandwell Council's Corporate Plan, March 2020
- Report to Emergency Committee - Post COVID-19 Recovery and Reset 6 May 2020

17 **APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1 – Report to Emergency Committee 27 May 2020 (and associated appendices)

Appendix 2 – Communication and Engagement Plan

David Stevens
Chief Executive