

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL (BMBC)

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan.

Report of the Executive Director
Core Services

SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP (TFG) REPORT ON COVID-19 RESPONSE, RECOVERY & RENEWAL

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet the findings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) from the investigation undertaken on its behalf by the Covid-19 Response, Recovery & Renewal Task and Finish Group (TFG). Although this group originally set out to look at a number of different future plans of the Council, due to the progression of the Covid-19 pandemic, the group maintained a focus on providing overview and scrutiny of the ongoing response, recovery and renewal from Covid-19. This involved meeting with a number of officers from different Council services as well as representatives from local Barnsley businesses. The TFG sought to make timely suggestions and recommendations during and after each meeting, a number of which have already been acted upon. This report also outlines a limited number of additional considerations in support of further improvement.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Cabinet considers the conclusions and recommendations set out in section 6 as a result of the TFG's investigation into the response, recovery and renewal from Covid-19.**

3. Introduction/Background

- 3.1 As part of its work programme the OSC originally agreed to undertake a TFG investigation into a number of future plans of the Council. It was hoped that as the group's investigation commenced in September 2020, the Council would be focusing on its recovery and renewal from Covid-19, as outlined in Barnsley's Recovery & Renewal Strategy - Moving on from Covid-19 (Cab.10.6.2020/11). However, as the group met, the number of Covid-19 cases locally, regionally and nationally began to rise which was followed by subsequent tiered restrictions as well as a national lockdown. This resulted in a number of services either remaining or going back into 'responding' to the challenges raised by the pandemic.
- 3.2 As a result, the TFG maintained a focus on providing overview and scrutiny of the ongoing response, recovery and renewal from Covid-19. This included assisting in shaping service responses by acting as a consultative group, as well as making timely suggestions and recommendations during and after its meetings.
- 3.3 The members of the TFG who undertook this investigation included the following:
Councillors Peter Fielding (TFG Lead Member), Jeff Ennis, Andrew Gillis, Joe Hayward, Dorothy Higginbottom, Sarah Tattersall and John Wilson.
- 3.4 As mentioned at each meeting, the TFG Members would like to take this opportunity to place on record their thanks to each and every member of staff of the Council, its partners and other services and businesses as well as volunteers who have worked night and day to respond to the challenges of the pandemic and to support Barnsley communities. They would also like to express their condolences to all those who have lost loved ones during this time.

4. What the Task & Finish Group (TFG) looked at

- 4.1 Initially, the TFG met to consider the scope of the investigation. This included discussing the Council's Recovery & Renewal Strategy and agreeing to undertake sessions to understand the

strategic viewpoint of this work, as well as to focus in on the key themes including: Health & Wellbeing; Business Economy; Community Resilience; Education & Skills; and Infrastructure and Environment. The group were also keen to understand and investigate the communications strategies linked to each of these areas as a critical factor in the success of all this work.

4.2 The group set out to consider the plans in place, how they were being co-ordinated and how effective they were. Also, to find out how well partner agencies were working together and the extent to which the views of key stakeholders, including the public, were being sought and considered. Additionally, to understand how flexible the plans are for responding to the future and what is in our control versus what we are only able to influence.

4.3 The TFG undertook a number of virtual 'check and challenge' sessions with officers regarding the work being carried out and future plans. This involved asking questions of them regarding their work, their involvement, and partnership working with other agencies, including the impact of this on Barnsley residents. The TFG were also able to consider and learn from local business representatives. To avoid duplication, the Members also utilised All Elected Member Information Briefings (AMIBs) as well as other Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings to ask questions relevant to the TFG's investigation. Specific meetings included:

- A session with the Council's Service Director for Environment & Transport and Service Director for Customer Information & Digital Services who are the Council's lead officers for overseeing the Council's Covid-19 Response, Recovery and Renewal work. This gave the TFG a strategic overview of this work alongside key elements of the Infrastructure and Environment theme of work, as well as providing contrasting examples of front-line and back-office adaptations to working practices;
- An Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on the Public Health approach to Covid-19, including the measures to prevent and manage it in Barnsley, as well as the ongoing challenges and future plans;
- An AMIB on Covid-19 and the Public Health/NHS response further to the commencement of another national lockdown. This included further detail on support to the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV);
- Undertaking a session with the Council's Head of Economic Development, Group Leader for Enterprising Barnsley and Group Leader for Markets to understand the work undertaken to support Barnsley businesses and the economy;
- Speaking with local business representatives to understand the challenges of the pandemic from their perspective as well as their views on the effectiveness of the support provided. This included meeting with the Chief Executive of Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce (BRCC), the Managing Director of Foster's Bakery, the Director of Walnut Creative and the Chief Executive of the National Market Trader's Federation;
- A session with the Council's Head of Communications & Marketing and the Communications & Marketing Manager leading on the Covid-19 work, to look at the communications strategies employed by the Council and its partners;
- An Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting on Education Attainment and Exam Preparation which included speaking with the Head Teacher of Horizon Community College, Principal of Penistone Grammar School and the Principal of Barnsley College; and
- A final session with the Service Director for Stronger, Safer & Healthier Communities and Head of Stronger Communities to consider the 'Community Resilience' theme of work including protecting the most vulnerable in society and preventing people from falling into crisis.

5. What the Task & Finish Group found

5.1 During the first meeting with officers in October 2020, the TFG gained an understanding of how the response, recovery and renewal work was being co-ordinated both at a local and regional level. This included the work with partner agencies within the Local Resilience Forum (LRF), such as South Yorkshire Police, South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, Yorkshire Ambulance Service and NHS organisations, as well as internal structures within the Council. This included how the working strategy and governance arrangements had adapted over time to suit the ongoing situation. The group queried the extent to which partners were working well together and were reassured that the

pandemic had enabled even closer working relationships and provided new opportunities for collaboration. The structures in place utilised existing governance arrangements which meant that on the whole this had not slowed the pace of working and services were enabled to progress flexibly with business as usual, with interventions only done on an exceptions basis.

- 5.2 Some of the key challenges had been on staffing and the pressure on individuals, especially given that managing the pandemic had now reached its eighth month. This was not only caused by many staff being tired from working at heightened levels for prolonged periods, but also the challenges of staff numbers being diminished due to those being required to self-isolate. The TFG were advised of the plans in place to support staff including encouraging them to take annual leave, the commissioning of support services, as well as corporate notices with regards to this.
- 5.3 The group were given contrasting examples of how services had adapted to the pandemic including how BMBC had fortuitously got IT infrastructure in place which enabled office-based staff to begin working from home overnight; thereby accelerating the Council's Digital First programme and removing barriers which had previously been in place. The group were advised of where working practices had been changed to adapt to new demands such as the need to increase waste collection rounds due to the rise in household waste and recycling from more people working from home. Also, where in advance of government guidance being available, the waste service had arranged for additional vehicles to accompany rounds so that waste operatives could socially distance, with advice being sought by other local authorities on how BMBC had adapted.
- 5.4 The group discussed the community spirit in Barnsley and the excellent response from individual volunteers and community groups coming forward. Members felt it was important that opportunity was created for sharing between best practice from Area Councils and Ward Alliances with regards to co-ordinating efforts from volunteers to avoid any duplication and any pitfalls in the future. The group also highlighted the importance of receiving intelligence on a ward basis, such as increases in Universal Credit claims so that this could be considered in the future commissioning of relevant support services in local areas.
- 5.5 In order to avoid duplication and demands on officer time, the TFG Members utilised the scheduled OSC meeting on 3rd November 2020 on the Public Health approach to Covid-19 which included representation from Barnsley Hospital, as well as an AMIB on 10th November following the recent national lockdown announcement, to explore the Health and Wellbeing aspects of the response, recovery and renewal work. These sessions gave the TFG members opportunity to provide scrutiny of the response to the pandemic as well as understand the figures regarding Covid-19 cases in Barnsley in a timely way.
- 5.6 The OSC meeting covered testing and contact tracing, care homes, staffing, health impacts and preparation in anticipation of a vaccine. Members expressed concern regarding services that were not operating as a result of Covid-19, such as screening and immunisation services, as well as access to dental treatment. Also, they were keen to understand the extent to which some face to face GP services were being offered due to the barriers to alternative provision by some vulnerable community members. During the AMIB, Members were keen to understand the pressures being faced by Barnsley Hospital and how this was being managed, as well as plans being put in place to cope with the current and future demands on mental health services. Members were assured that services were stretched, but managing, and were working on a partnership basis, including developing a Mental Health Partnership to forecast and plan for the future.
- 5.7 In focusing on the Business Economy theme of the response, recovery and renewal work, the group were keen to understand and provide 'check and challenge' of the support being provided to local businesses. The group welcomed knowledge of the work to undertake a sectoral economic impact assessment to look at how best to utilise available resources to maximise their impact in supporting businesses and preventing job losses; whilst acknowledging that the full impacts will not be known until the central government furlough scheme ends.
- 5.8 The group praised the work of the Council's economic development arm 'Enterprising Barnsley' which provides wide-ranging support to Barnsley businesses, which from the start of the pandemic

quickly established online as well as telephone support for businesses in helping them to access grants as well as provide advice, such as on the government furlough scheme. In already knowing Barnsley businesses well, this enabled the provision of tailored support, as well as opportunity to gain intelligence from businesses on what support they required and where there were gaps in central government support. This in turn helped to design how local support packages were administered, such as to the self-employed, sole traders and those impacted within supply chains. Members welcomed knowledge that support provision was not only financial, but there were offers of coaching support, marketing, and developing lean businesses processes. The TFG were also impressed by the work of Enterprising Barnsley as part of Sheffield City Region (SCR), often taking the lead on shaping and administering business support schemes. As part of this work, the service recognised untapped potential in local business supply chains and the importance of local organisations utilising local supply chains including public sector bodies such as the Council, schools, police and NHS organisations.

- 5.9 Members queried how many of the businesses seeking support had not been able to be assisted by the Enterprising Barnsley team, which the service advised they would undertake further analysis of to identify any areas which could be addressed. The group also challenged the service on the extent to which Enterprising Barnsley services are known about and promoted locally, to which they acknowledged that there is always more that could be done, but utilised available channels such as ensuring Regulatory Services colleagues made local businesses aware of the service. The TFG also acknowledged the role of all Elected Members in promoting the service in local communities. Members were keen to ensure that local businesses were being supported in particular with regards to their digital offer, such as quickly moving to online trading models. This also included querying opportunities to develop a local Barnsley delivery service to help businesses such as pubs provide takeaway food whilst avoiding the costly charges of national food delivery services. This would also mean there could be a local shared platform for businesses, rather than each of them promoting their services via limited individual social media pages, to which the service advised they would investigate the appetite for this as part of their launchpad programme.
- 5.10 In terms of support to the retail sector in particular, the TFG were keen to ensure spend is kept local and were introduced to the 'Shop Appy' scheme which was due for imminent launch at the time of the meeting. The scheme enables local businesses and shops to show information, products and services they have for sale all in one place. Items can be purchased via 'click and collect' either from individual shops or for collection from one place. The TFG welcomed news of this scheme and were keen to ensure its promotion both to local businesses to participate but also for local communities to utilise it.
- 5.11 As a follow on to the meeting with Council officers, the TFG were keen to hear directly from local business representatives regarding the challenges they had faced, and support received as a result of the pandemic. Through the discussion the TFG heard how local businesses had shown great innovation during the pandemic in adapting to the circumstances by diversifying their offer as well as quickly moving to make sure they had an online presence. For many businesses getting online had been something they had been working on for months/years; however, this was done at the start of the pandemic in a matter of weeks for some, such as local market traders. It was really positive to hear how some of the business representatives had been involved in national forums at central government level to ensure local voices are being heard and to lobby for appropriate support to be provided to businesses as well as creating resources to help new and upcoming businesses thrive. It was also highlighted that as a result of the pandemic partnership working with the Council and local organisations has been strengthened and is very productive. This has meant that local business representatives are ensuring the voice of industry is being heard in a wider variety of forums, including amongst healthcare providers with regards to caring for employee mental health and wellbeing.
- 5.12 The business representatives were complementary with regards to how Barnsley Council had supported a number of them and those they represent during the pandemic. They mentioned specific examples where they had spoken to other businesses around the country who hadn't had any such support from their local authority. In addition to the positive feedback received, the discussion

highlighted a number of potential areas for improvement which are outlined in paragraph 6.2 of this report.

- 5.13 As mentioned previously, given the importance of communications throughout the pandemic in terms of getting messages out on public health measures and government restrictions as well as the variety of support services available locally, the TFG were keen to investigate communications strategies specifically to ensure they were clear and reaching appropriate audiences. Committee members welcomed the work being undertaken by BMBC's Communications and Marketing Team alongside local and regional partners and the work to ensure the frequent refresh of the communications strategies to ensure they remain current. The work undertaken to simplify messages for local communities was particularly appreciated by the TFG and they were keen for this to continue given they are aware of the confusion that can occur amongst communities regarding central government messages. The group were also encouraged to hear how Barnsley employees were taking a leading role at a regional level at the LRF with regards to communications.
- 5.14 A particular area of concern for the group was regarding the use of social media as the main channel of communication given that a number of older people in particular would not have access to such forums. The officers however demonstrated the rise in all ages, especially older people, in the use of social media and also how such forums have also engaged some of our harder to reach communities, such as those where English is not their first language. Members also welcomed the work undertaken around myth-busting and felt this is particularly important in terms of the vaccine being rolled out. As part of this, the group acknowledged Elected Members' role in providing intelligence to the Communications and Marketing Team where they hear of either confusion or incorrect messages being spread amongst communities so that this can be addressed.
- 5.15 The TFG were advised of national work on behavioural insights around messaging and the plans in place to investigate this in more detail locally, to ensure messaging around Covid-19 is effective. The group also agreed with the Team's principles around messaging focusing on the positive aspects of what the public can do and the benefits of this, rather than what they can't, as well as support to businesses to help them comply, rather than taking an enforcement approach. The TFG welcomed the proactive work to remove old messages from media channels and suggested that it would be helpful for items to be dated so that the public are aware of when the information was published and the likelihood of them being relevant. Finally, the committee were reassured by the Communications and Marketing Team's involvement in the development of the 2030 outcomes work and future plans for the Borough, and in responding to the feedback from the LGA peer report on the Council's Recovery and Renewal Strategy. As a result of the discussion, the TFG highlighted a number of suggestions directly after the meeting, which are outlined in paragraph 6.3 of this report.
- 5.16 Again, in avoiding duplication, the TFG utilised the planned OSC meeting on Education Attainment and Exam Preparation on 12th January 2021 to oversee the Education & Skills theme of the response, recovery and renewal work. This included speaking with local authority representatives as well as the Head Teacher of Horizon Community College, Principal of Penistone Grammar School and the Principal of Barnsley College. Members were able to investigate the support being provided to pupils remaining in the education system, including access to IT facilities, as well as those moving on to new destinations such as university, places of work or taking gap years. Support for the wellbeing of both staff and pupils was explored, and Members were reassured that work was being done wherever possible to minimise any disadvantage due to the pandemic for all children and young people, but undoubtedly there were likely to be impacts.
- 5.17 For the group's final session, they considered the Community Resilience elements of the Council's Covid-19 response, recovery and renewal work. The Stronger, Safer, Healthier Communities Service has supported a variety of agendas including Safer Neighbourhood Services, Poverty the Good Food Barnsley Community Interest Company (CiC) and Homelessness, all of which have been or are due to be considered by the OSC or one of its TFGs. Therefore, the group were provided with an overview of these areas and focused on a strategic look at the support to communities including the 3rd sector, volunteers and support to the CEV. From the outset, the service prioritised protecting the CEV, supporting the homeless, preventing people from falling into crisis and supporting

communities to bounce back, given that many people will be nervous about this having not left the house for a considerable time.

- 5.18 The TFG welcomed knowledge of the Healthier Communities Team as well as the Stronger Communities Area Teams and their work in supporting the Emergency Contact Centre and co-ordinating volunteers to help out in communities, providing them with training on befriending and safeguarding, as well as ensuring they had formal identification badges to prevent fraud. It was recognised that there had also been significant collaboration with other BMBC departments and partners in the provision of this support. Work was done to co-ordinate the creation of a large number of face masks for distribution whilst also raising money for charity. Work in local communities has also included facilitating access to the Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) Scheme to access financial support, food and health & wellbeing support. The service highlighted the challenges in getting messages out to communities regarding support services, acknowledging that not everyone is online and so therefore they undertook leafleting. During this time, the service advised of its close working with partners as well as their leading role in work at a regional basis. Also, how efforts have been made to celebrate communities and volunteers, for example through the Mayor's Award which was welcomed by all those involved.
- 5.19 The service highlighted the challenges of co-ordinating work across communities, especially with a number of new community groups and volunteers starting up and trying to maintain an awareness of all the support services being made available. The service advised they had learnt a number of lessons in terms of making earlier plans to co-ordinate volunteers in future years, such as beginning planning for Christmas in July. The service encouraged Members to refer new community groups to Barnsley Community & Voluntary Services (CVS) and South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau (SYFAB) for support with constituting their groups as well as accessing funding, which also means we can keep a greater awareness of such groups in communities. Linked with this, further to the recent OSC meeting on education, Members highlighted the need to create and encourage volunteering opportunities for increasing numbers of young people leaving college and taking gap years, especially given that sectors which usually provide jobs and work experience for young people had been severely impacted. As a result of the discussion, the TFG highlighted a number of suggestions directly after the meeting, which are outlined in paragraph 6.4 of this report.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Officers commented that they welcomed the opportunity to share work with members and utilise the group as a sounding board to help shape developments, especially as preparation for the meetings had given them time to reflect on the work being undertaken. Throughout the investigation, the TFG members made a number of suggestions and recommendations regarding the work being undertaken, summaries of which were sent to officers immediately following meetings, given the nature of this investigation and to support timely responses to the challenges of the pandemic.
- 6.2 With regards to support to businesses, areas for improvement/recommendations included:
- As national government criteria to receive financial support has been challenging, especially for small businesses; sole traders; those who are self-employed, such as market traders; people working from home; and ones that don't pay business rates due to their location, any future local discretionary funding should be prioritised for these groups.
 - It was felt that not all businesses in Barnsley were given the same support and flexibility as others, such as market traders received reduction in their rent, whereas others in Council accommodation had to continue to pay rent charges despite not being able to utilise their workspace.
 - It was also highlighted that a number of softer support initiatives were available via Enterprising Barnsley, such as management training; however, at times like this, it was felt that more concrete support should be prioritised such as financial support as this is what businesses need to keep going.
 - The attendees commented on the slow pace of decision making and putting plans into action within the public sector compared with the private sector and the importance of this getting better was highlighted, especially as these delays can cause irrecoverable losses in the private sector.

- Given the developments of the Sheffield City Region Deal, the representatives were keen to make sure that the funds were given out proportionately and were keen that the smaller districts were given parity of esteem with the city.
- The business representatives also recognised the need for local authorities to come together through the Local Government Association (LGA) to lobby central government regarding local support, as well as ensuring that for example market traders are able to continue trading in the same way supermarkets have been through restrictions, as they have shown they can operate safely; however, have lost out to large national companies.
- The attendees highlighted that they would like to see Barnsley Council run an advertising campaign for the people of Barnsley to support local independent businesses, especially as most of them are local residents and this helps to improve our local economy which is vital.
- The group would also like to see improvements to the variety of collection points as part of 'Shop Appy', especially in those outside the town centre. This includes encouraging local premises to take part and to understand the benefits such as the increased footfall this can bring to their own local business.
- A specific idea which should be considered for Barnsley is a coffee shop which currently operates in London where customers are provided with free refreshments all day such as cakes and drinks as they pay per hour to be there. This means that customers can choose to be there all day and work and it helps to support micro-businesses to get underway.
- Another specific consideration for Barnsley would be to have a more locally based low cost online trading platform for local businesses – perhaps forming the basis of a local online directory of businesses. This could complement the 'Shop Appy' scheme and avoid the extortionate fees charged by the big national platforms.
- Finally, it was noted that in Barnsley we have some of the best agencies in the UK and it would be helpful for the Council to finance a Marketing Board which can bring local businesses together to support each other, rather than businesses based in Barnsley always looking to gain work and contracts from elsewhere. This not only helps local businesses to thrive but keeps commerce locally and helps with our local economy.

6.3 With regards to communications, the TFG made the following recommendations:

- The TFG acknowledge the role that all Elected Members have in helping to share messages as trusted members of their communities by utilising corporate communications, as well as sharing their insight and soft intelligence if they hear of incorrect messages or confusion in communities so that this can be used to help to shape messaging accordingly.
- Members raised concerns over the lack of communications regarding the distribution of vaccines in Barnsley which was causing confusion amongst communities and creating unnecessary phone calls to GPs. The TFG appreciate partners are under the constraints of NHS England (NHSE); however, feel that this issue is imperative, especially given the challenge we may have in encouraging particular communities to take up the vaccine. It would also be helpful to give communities an indication of how the vaccine will be rolled out and over what timescales.
- To support in encouraging communities to take-up the vaccine, Members suggested using local key figures to promote having the vaccine, including compiling short videos which could be shared.
- The group highlighted the risk there is to taking any medication or vaccine; however, that we all take such medications every day. The group were keen to ensure that messaging to residents was not false in saying that there was no risk to taking the vaccine but to highlight that it is managed and very low risk, in the same way we all take lots of medications/vaccines.
- Members were keen to ensure that messaging remains current and is updated accordingly; highlighting the need to put dates on when information was last updated.
- A specific query was raised regarding the safety of the use of vizors and whether these need to be accompanied with a face mask further to a discussion with a local community group and requested that some wider communications regarding this are put out accordingly.

6.4 With regards to work around communities, the TFG made the following recommendations:

- Parish Councils to be made aware of the good work the Council is doing in communities as well as where to report intelligence to. It was suggested the Leader could hold a virtual meeting with all Parish Councillors or that written briefings could be provided to facilitate this.

- Information to go to all Councillors with advice on what to do if approached by a community group wanting to form, so they can seek guidance and support.
- Forward planning to be undertaken regarding recruiting young people as volunteers, both due to limited paid work experience opportunities, but also from Year 13 students delaying going to University for a year in the hope by which time the impacts of the pandemic will have reduced.
- It would be helpful for all Councillors to get feedback from the discussions at the quarterly Area Chairs' liaison meetings, so they are aware of work across all areas.

6.5 In addition to the suggestions above, the TFG would also like to recommend the following:

6.6 **Recommendation 1: A session is held for Members and officers from across different Area Councils and Ward Alliances to share lessons learned and good practice in their local areas from their experiences during the pandemic, and this should be utilised to inform other recovery work and how we support communities**

Given the community spirit across Barnsley, it would be helpful to understand across different areas the initiatives that have been undertaken during this time, how the efforts of volunteers have been co-ordinated and where there may be areas for learning, so that best practice can be developed and shared across all Area Councils and Ward Alliances for the future. This learning should also be utilised to inform the ongoing recovery work and how we support communities over the next year.

6.7 **Recommendation 2: In recognition of the importance of local public sector organisations utilising local supply chains and supporting the local economy, Health and Wellbeing Board members could be tasked with reviewing this in each of their organisations and placing this in their corporate performance management frameworks**

Whilst the group recognise that there will be specialist equipment the organisations may need to source from elsewhere, they are keen to ensure that where services can be obtained from Barnsley businesses that this is done to support the local economy and maximise the number of jobs in Barnsley.

6.8 **Recommendation 3: A briefing sheet to be provided to all Elected Members on Enterprising Barnsley and the support services available as well as other key schemes to support the local economy such as 'Shop Appy' so Members can easily share this within their communities**

Members recognise the role they have in promoting Council services; however, it can be challenging for them to maintain an awareness of all of these. Therefore, it would be helpful for them to have a summary they can easily share as appropriate.

The TFG would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who provided information, attended meetings and assisted with the TFG's investigation; it is much appreciated.

7. **Implications for local people / service users**

7.1 The investigation undertaken by the TFG as well as the recommendations made are in support of maximising the support to Barnsley communities, including local residents as well as businesses as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The TFG acknowledge the good work already undertaken as part of this and support the future development of services in the hope they are able to 'build back better'.

8. **Financial implications**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the financial implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

9. **Employee implications**

9.1 There are no specific employee implications, although in responding to the recommendations in the report, the employee implications of these would need to be fully assessed by the appropriate services responding.

10. Communications implications

- 10.1 A key part of the TFG's investigation and resulting recommendations was to ensure key messages around public health measures and government restrictions as well as the variety of support services available locally, were clear and reaching appropriate audiences. The TFG were provided with evidence of this and are keen that future communications continue to be directed through a variety of channels. Also, it is recommended that items are dated so that so that the public are aware of when the information was published and the likelihood of them being relevant.

11. Consultations

- 11.1 Consultations have taken place with: the Covid-19 Response, Recovery & Renewal TFG Members; the OSC; the Council's Cabinet Members, Council Officers from All Directorates; local business representatives; and the Council's Senior Management Team.

12. The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

- 12.1 As outlined in the Corporate Plan, the three priorities for Barnsley are: a thriving and vibrant economy, citizens achieving their potential, and strong & resilient communities. The Council's response, recovery and renewal work aligns to the Council's existing planning and performance processes, with key performance indicators being carefully monitored and dealt with on an exceptions basis as appropriate.

13. Promoting equality & diversity and social inclusion

- 13.1 The TFG is keen to ensure that all Council services and activities are accessible to all its communities. Throughout the TFG's involvement in this work they have specifically referred to making sure that messages are clear to all our residents, for example where English is an additional language and accessing hard to reach communities.

14. Tackling the impact of poverty

- 14.1 The TFG recognise the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on all Barnsley communities, including those who may have already been living in poverty, as well as those who have been adversely impacted as a direct result, such as losing their job. Throughout the investigation, Members were keen to ensure that available support was being communicated and provided to individuals and families. Also, to ensure that support was being maximised to Barnsley businesses in support of protecting the Barnsley economy and the provision of local jobs.

15. Risk management issues

- 15.1 The TFG were advised of how risk and threat assessments are an ongoing part of the Covid-19 recovery process. It is likely the recommended activities detailed in this report will contribute further to the effective mitigation of risks associated with the Covid-19 response, recovery and renewal work. It would therefore be appropriate for any follow-up report to be cognisant of these risks.

16. Glossary

AMIB	All Elected Member Information Briefing
BMBC	Barnsley Metropolitan borough Council
BRCC	Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce
BCVS	Barnsley Community & Voluntary Services
CEV	Clinically Extremely Vulnerable
LRF	Local Resilience Forum
OSC	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
SCR	Sheffield City Region
SYFAB	South Yorkshire Funding Advice Bureau
TFG	Task and Finish Group

17. **Background papers and useful links**

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) recovery plan for Barnsley information page (including video): <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/health-and-wellbeing/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-recovery-plan-for-barnsley/>
- Barnsley's Recovery & Renewal Strategy - Moving on from Covid-19 (Cab.10.6.2020/11): <https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s66098/Draft%20Recovery%20Strategy%20202021.pdf>
- OSC meeting on the Public Health approach to Covid-19 in Barnsley, 3rd November 2020: <https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=224&MId=6407&Ver=4>
- OSC meeting on Education Outcome and Exam Preparation in Barnsley, 12th January 2021: <https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=224&MId=6414&Ver=4>
- 'Shop Appy' Barnsley: <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/markets/click-and-collect/>

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Date: 26th February 2021