

Public Document Pack

Date of meeting Monday, 1st June, 2020
Time 7.00 pm
Venue via Video - Conference
Contact Geoff Durham 742222



**NEWCASTLE
UNDER LYME**
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Castle House
Barracks Road
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 1BL

Health, Wellbeing & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

PART 1 – OPEN AGENDA

- 1 APOLOGIES**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING** **(Pages 3 - 6)**
To consider the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 2 March, 2020.
- 4 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE AND RECOVERY PLAN** **(Pages 7 - 22)**
- 5 URGENT BUSINESS**
- 6 DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION**

To resolve that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the attached report, because it is likely that there will be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs contained within Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members: Councillors I. Wilkes (Chair), Miss J Cooper (Vice-Chair), J. Cooper, A. Gardner, T. Kearon, B. Panter, R. Wright, S. Moffat, K. Owen, S. Burgess, M. Holland, P. Northcott, H. Maxfield and J Waring

Members of the Council: If you identify any personal training/development requirements from any of the items included in this agenda or through issues raised during the meeting, please bring them to the attention of the Democratic Services Officer at the close of the meeting.

Meeting Quorums :- 16+= 5 Members; 10-15=4 Members; 5-9=3 Members; 5 or less = 2 Members.

SUBSTITUTE MEMBER SCHEME (Appendix 9, Section 4 of Constitution)

The Constitution provides for the appointment of Substitute members to attend Committees. The named Substitutes for this meeting are listed below:-

Substitute Members:	Mrs J Cooper	A. Fox-Hewitt
	A. Fear	G. Heesom
	S. Pickup	G. Hutton
	B. Proctor	J. Walklate

If you are unable to attend this meeting and wish to appoint a Substitute to attend in your place you need to:

- Identify a Substitute member from the list above who is able to attend on your behalf
- Notify the Chairman of the Committee (at least 24 hours before the meeting is due to take place) NB Only 2 Substitutes per political group are allowed for each meeting and your Chairman will advise you on whether that number has been reached

Online Committee Meeting Joining Instructions

This meeting will be held virtually using Zoom.

Watching the Meeting

You can attend the meeting in the following ways:

Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82235145439>

Using the Zoom App

Telephone: 0330 088 5830 or 0131 460 1196

The Conference ID for telephone and Zoom App users is: 822-3514-5439

You do not require a password or pre-registration to access this committee meeting.

Please note, as an attendee you will only be able to watch the meeting. You will not be able to vote, ask questions or discuss the materials presented to the committee.

Public Document Pack **Agenda Item 3**

Health, Wellbeing & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee - 02/03/20

HEALTH, WELLBEING & PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 2nd March, 2020
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor Ian Wilkes (Chair)

Councillors:	Miss J Cooper	S. Moffat	P. Northcott
	J. Cooper	K. Owen	M. Holland
	A. Gardner	S. Burgess	

Officers:	Andrew Bird	Head of Recycling, Waste and Fleet Services
	Denise French	Democratic Services Team Leader
	Roger Tait	Head of Operations

Also in attendance: Councillor Simon Tagg Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder - Corporate and Service Improvement, People and Partnerships

16. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor T Kearon.

17. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

18. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 2nd December be confirmed as a correct record.

19. **UPDATE FROM CABINET**

The Leader of the Council confirmed that there were no items from the last meeting that required an update from Cabinet.

20. **MINUTES OF THE HEALTHY STAFFORDSHIRE SELECT COMMITTEE AND DIGEST - 3 FEBRUARY 2020**

The Committee considered the regular Digest submitted by Staffordshire County Council.

The issues around Bradwell Hospital had been raised with the County Council as requested by the Committee but timescales meant there was insufficient time to take any action. A meeting organised by the Clinical Commissioning Group had been attended by a number of Committee members including the Vice Chair. The result was that although the hospital would be losing bed provision a number of services

and clinics would remain which meant there were some positive outcomes from the process.

Resolved: that the Digest and update be received and noted.

21. GREATER USE OF PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

The Head of Operations presented a joint report prepared by himself and the Head of Leisure and Culture. The report outlined options for undertaking scrutiny work on the topic of encouraging greater use of parks and green spaces to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The report suggested 3 main strands for consideration:

- To assess whether there were issues around physical and mental ill health in the Borough and if so, what was the scale of the issue;
- Whether parks and green spaces were part of the solution;
- Identifying whether there were any barriers to accessing parks and green spaces.

The report proposed setting up a Task and Finish Group to scope and investigate the topic and report back to the Committee with findings and recommendations.

In discussing the topic, a number of points were raised including:

- Good practice at various parks was highlighted including cafes run by volunteers and community events such as Bonfire Night;
- Being outdoors was seen as particularly beneficial for people with dementia;
- Introducing small initiatives such as “happy to chat” benches could have a positive impact;
- Perception was important and encouraging greater usage would help to promote spaces as available for all ages;
- Was there a role to also address climate issues through tree planting schemes and initiatives such as “adopt a tree”;
- Involving children in planting schemes would help to make the area a community space and could reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour; it was important that people felt safe when using parks and green spaces;
- It was important to focus on smaller parks and green spaces as well as larger parks; the provision would vary between different facilities and community groups could be asked about the provision they would like to see in their area;
- Ensure provision was wide ranging to include all groups and all ages;
- Could the Council participate in “I Love Parks” week in July;
- Physical access to parks needed to be considered including parking availability around parks and green spaces;
- It was noted that the outdoor gym equipment was popular and well used;
- Initiatives and funding opportunities could be explored including the Woodland Trust; Government funding for “Pocket Parks” and S106 monies;
- There may be opportunities to engage with Keele University and Newcastle College in research or measuring success.

Resolved: That a Task and Finish Group be established with the following membership – Councillor Burgess, Miss J Cooper, Gardner, Holland and Moffatt – and an initial meeting be held to agree the scope and terms of reference.

22. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme. Councillor Gardner updated that following the presentation to the previous meeting regarding Domestic Abuse services she would be undertaking visits to facilities as had been offered. The presentation had referred to the White Ribbon campaign and it was hoped that the Council could achieve this status in the future. Councillors Miss J Cooper and Moffatt agreed to work with Councillor Gardner on scrutinising Domestic Abuse services.

Members referred to CCTV provision and the Committee was informed that cameras were on order with delivery expected later in the month. This initiative was part funded by the Newcastle Business Improvement District (BID).

The Committee was informed that the Purple Flag initiative was being led by the BID with support from the Borough Council and agreed to have a report back on reaccreditation to a future meeting.

Members were informed of a change by West Midlands Ambulance Service as to how the Community First Responders scheme operated; this would come into effect on 1st April 2020. A motion on this issue was to be submitted to full Council on 1st April 2020.

Resolved: that

- (a) A Task and Finish Group comprising Councillors Miss J Cooper, A Gardner and S Moffatt progress work on Domestic Abuse services and report back to a future meeting;
- (b) An update be made to the next meeting of the Committee on progress with CCTV installation; and
- (c) An update be made to the September meeting of the Committee on the Purple Flag scheme and reaccreditation.

23. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

24. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

25. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - MONDAY 1 JUNE 2020

Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.15 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

**Health Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
01 June 2020**

Report Title: **Coronavirus Pandemic Update**

Submitted by: **Chief Executive**

Portfolios: **Corporate and Service Improvement, People and Partnerships; Leisure, Culture and Heritage; Community Safety and Wellbeing**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

<p><u>Purpose of the Report</u></p> <p>To provide the Committee with a Covid-19 update in terms of the issues arising and actions taken in within the service areas that fall under the Committee's remit.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>That the Committee receives the report and offers feedback to Cabinet</p>
<p><u>Reasons</u></p> <p>To provide the Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise actions undertaken to date and the proposals for the next phases of recovery.</p>

1. **Background**
 - 1.1 The Coronavirus pandemic is the greatest single risk to the health and wellbeing of this country since the Second World War. In February 2020 the Council established an Incident Management Team to plan the Council's response, ensuring that support to local residents and businesses was provided, that Council services were maintained, and the welfare of officers and members protected.
 - 1.2 Informal Cabinet has been regularly briefed on the work being progressed, including a daily briefing with the Leader. The approach adopted is based on existing business contingency arrangements which have put the Council in a good position to respond rapidly and effectively.
 - 1.3 The Incident Management Team interfaces with a range of groups which have been set up countywide to co-ordinate the response to the pandemic, including the Strategic Coordinating Group, and working groups on mortality management and vulnerability.
 - 1.4 Cabinet received a report on the Council's response work at its meetings on 22 April and 20 May. The 22 April report focused predominantly on the initial impact of the pandemic on Council services, and its immediate response to the pandemic. The 20 May report provided an update on those matters and outlined the work streams in the Council's "Back on Track" recovery programme following the (then) recently announced government recovery strategy.

1.5 The two Cabinet reports are available as background documents. There is also an appendix to this report (Appendix 2) which sets out the very latest statistical information on infection rates and impacts in the region.

2. **Issues**

2.1 Insofar as the service areas within the remit of this committee are concerned, issues arise in the following areas:-

- Vulnerable Residents
- Domestic Abuse
- Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping
- Customer Services
- Bereavement Services
- Cultural & Leisure Provision
- Member & Officer Wellbeing

2.2 Appendix 1 deals with each topic in more detail.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 That the Committee receives the report and offers feedback to Cabinet.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 So that there is an opportunity to scrutinise the Council's response to the CV-19 pandemic and to offer feedback to Cabinet on the same.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 Not Applicable.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 There are no such implications arising directly from this report. Addressing the impact of Coronavirus locally has involved adjustment to some service provision. When making such changes there are a number of legal and statutory implications to take into account. These are all appropriately factored into decision taking by the Incident Management Team.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 There are no equality implications arising directly from this report. Members will, however, note the particular emphasis placed on supporting vulnerable people in the Council's response to the pandemic.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 The Council's General Fund balance as at 31st March 2019 was £1.548m. Careful monitoring of the financial position will be required over coming weeks and months leading to prompt corrective action where necessary to ensure that reserves are not exhausted and the Council remains in a position of being able to deliver a balanced budget position in the current financial year and beyond.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 There are a number of risks associated with the Pandemic and the Council's response to it. These are discussed in more detail in Appendix 1.

10. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

10.1 There are no such implications arising from this report. Any direct implications for sustainability and climate change are discussed, where relevant, in reports dealing with the implementation of specific measures that give rise to the same.

11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This report does not relate to a Key Decision.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 Cabinet Resolutions of 22 April and 20 May.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Appendix 1 – Staffordshire County Council Coronavirus Stakeholder Update

13.2 Appendix 2 – Discussion Paper – CV-19 implications for the Health, Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 Cabinet reports referred to:-

<https://moderngov.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=118&Year=0>

This page is intentionally left blank

Staffordshire County Council Coronavirus/COVID19 Update

This briefing summarises the National and Regional COVID19 situation and a summary of key response and recovery activity undertaken by the county council.

Wednesday 27th May 2020

National & Local Situation – Cases & Deaths

- As of 0900hrs on 27th May 2020, there have been **3,798,490** COVID19 tests undertaken in the UK.
- There were **117,013** tests on 26th May 2020. This figure includes kits sent out to homes and test centres. Of those tested so far **267,240** have tested positive for COVID19¹.
- As of 1700hrs on 26th May 2020, of those who tested positive for COVID19 in the UK, **37,460** have sadly died. This is an increase of **412** across all settings, not just in hospitals.
- The equivalent figure under the old measure would have been **30,177**.

	Tests	People tested*	Positive	Deaths in hospitals	Deaths in all settings
<i>Daily</i>	117,013	Unavailable	2,013	212	412
Total	3,798,490	Unavailable	267,240	30,177	37,460

* n.b. A number of technical issues have been experienced with regards to testing and therefore, certain data cannot be updated fully at the present time.

Staffordshire Situation 26th May 2020

Numbers of confirmed Hospital Admissions & Rates per 100,000 Resident Population

Local Authority	Number	Rate	Daily Increase	Change since 22/05/20	% Regional Total	% National Total
England Total	150,903	269.6	609	3,158		
Regional Total	16,692	282.9	58	346		11.06%
Cannock Chase	209	208.8	-	3	1.26%	0.14%
East Staffordshire	314	264.8	3	6	1.89%	0.21%
Lichfield	286	275.1	1	6	1.72%	0.19%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	438	338.3	2	13	2.63%	0.29%
South Staffordshire	273	243.5	1	2	1.64%	0.18%
Stafford	304	223.7	1	9	1.83%	0.20%
Staffordshire Moorlands	214	217.5	2	15	1.29%	0.14%
Tamworth	181	236.1	2	10	1.09%	0.12%
Staffordshire CC	2,219	253.5	12	64	13.34%	1.48%

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Clap for Carers – Final Event

- The UK's weekly applause for front-line workers tackling the COVID19 pandemic will end tomorrow (Thursday, 28th May 2020). This will be the tenth and last in the series. The final Clap For Our Carers will happen on Thursday 28 May at 2000hrs. After tomorrow's event the focus will be upon Clap For Our Carers becoming an annual celebration

¹ n.b. A number of technical issues have been experienced with regards to testing and therefore, certain data cannot be updated fully at the present time.

Staffordshire County Council Coronavirus/COVID19 Update

Latest COVID19 Related Announcements – National News

NHS England Test and Trace System

- Today, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson MP gave evidence to the House of Commons Liaison Committee. During the session, the Prime Minister announced that the national COVID19 Test and Trace operation will begin tomorrow 28th May 2020 at 0900hrs. People who tested positive today will be the first to be contacted.
- The aim of the test and trace system is to move from the lockdown of the many to the isolation of the few. Test and trace will also give far more detail on how and where the virus is spreading with the information potentially allowing for **local lockdowns to tackle flare-ups** in towns, schools or workplaces.
- This system requires that all those experiencing COVID19 symptoms will need to be tested for the virus. If the test is positive the NHS will be in contact to discuss what close contact has taken place and with whom. Any of those contacts deemed at risk of catching the virus will be instructed by the NHS to go into isolation for 14 days. It should be noted however that scientists have warned it is not a "magic bullet" and may prevent between 5% and 15% of infections.
- Mr Johnson told the members of the Liaison Committee that the government "will consider bringing in financial sanctions" if people do not self-isolate. The Prime minister also stated that the goal is to have all tests completed and returned within 24 hours.

Opening of Retail establishments

- The Prime Minister Boris Johnson MP has announced that certain retail establishments and other services for the public will be allowed to open in June 2020 as part of the easing of the COVID19 lockdown. These include:
 - From 1st June 2020, outdoor markets and car showrooms;
 - From 15th June 2020, all non-essential retailers.
- The full list that (although some are already allowed to be open) includes:
 - Food retailers
 - Charity shops
 - Auction houses
 - Antique stores
 - Craft fairs
 - Gift shops & retail spaces in theatres, museums, libraries, heritage & tourism sites
 - The guidance also applies to those currently open, including banks, post offices and other money businesses
 - Chemists
 - Fashion shops
 - Car dealerships
 - Betting shops & arcades
 - Retail art galleries
 - Hardware/homeware stores
 - Mobile phone stores
 - Indoor and outdoor markets
 - Tailors, dress fitters & fashion designers
 - Photography studios

Opening will be subject to the ongoing COVID19 situation and the continued reduction in the numbers of reported cases.

Staffordshire County Council Coronavirus/COVID19 Update

Latest COVID19 Related Announcements – Staffordshire

Care Act Easements

- As previously stated, the county council took the decision to implement care act easements in line with the Coronavirus Act 2020 owing to capacity issues; therefore, the authority had temporarily introduced a streamlined COVID19 assessment form and suspended routine annual reviews.
- The county council now has improved staffing capacity, and, therefore it is no longer operating under “Care Act Easements” and is now providing full Care Act Assessments and annual reviews.
- The county council continues to review staffing capacity and the demand pressures for adult social care services, and care act easements will only be reinstated if it is necessary to ensure the sustainability of adult social care services to protect Staffordshire’s most vulnerable residents.

Weekly Office of National Statistics Report:

Deaths occurred up to 15 May, and registered up to 22 May:

- All deaths in Staffordshire remained fairly stable in week ended 15th May at 193, with a drop in COVID19 deaths to 45, compared to 56 in the previous week.
- In week ended 15th May, Staffordshire recorded 37 deaths, above the 2015-19 average, a similar position as in the previous week.
- All deaths in care homes, continue to drop. There were 42 deaths in care homes in week ended 15th May, down from 54 in the previous week. COVID19 deaths in Care Homes have also dropped – 12 in week ended 15th May, down from 17 in the previous week.
- There has been a total of 666 COVID19 related deaths in Staffordshire since the start of the outbreak, with 45 in the week ended 15th May.
- There has been a total of 164 COVID19 deaths in care homes since the start of the outbreak (25% of all COVID19 deaths)

Test and Trace – Local Delivery

- Further details of the Test and Trace Service have been confirmed. Every area will have an Outbreak Control Plan and an Outbreak Control Committee, including Staffordshire. This will be led by the county council.
- The PM has said there will be “strong directional effort and control” input by the new Joint Biosecurity Centre.
- The county council’s role will focus on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in places such as workplaces, care homes and schools.
- With lock down restrictions easing further from next week the county council is now reinforcing plans to ensure we are in a strong position to manage any local outbreaks both swiftly and effectively.

Staffordshire County Council Coronavirus/COVID19 Update

Funding available to support armed forces charities through Coronavirus

- Funding is available for those organisations across Staffordshire that are helping support their local Armed Forces Communities through the COVID19 pandemic. Grants of up to £60,000 are being made available by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust with support to apply from Staffordshire County Council.
- Voluntary groups, charities and community interest companies delivering services to veterans, Armed Forces families and others from the Armed Forces community are eligible for the grants.
- Projects must provide support in areas including: Support to the elderly, Service families, Mental and physical health, Domestic violence, Housing and employment, or to help keep valuable services up and running.
- The closing date for applications is Friday 29 May 2020. People can get further information on eligibility and apply at www.covenantfund.org.uk

English Tourism Week (25th – 31st May 2020)

- This week is English Tourism Week next week (25th-31st May). Tourism continues to play a huge role in Staffordshire generating millions of pounds for the local economy and employing thousands of people.
- English Tourism Week provides an opportunity to recognise the contribution tourism makes to the Staffordshire economy and cherish what we have, from some of the biggest theme parks in the country to the guesthouses and cafes going the extra mile to give visitors a wonderful experience; all of whom will need support after the lockdown, and we urge all Staffordshire residents to do their bit to help this vital industry get back on its feet over the next few months.
- Please pledge their support by posting a photo or video message on your social media channels holding the “[I Support English Tourism](#)” sign (download here) along with the hashtag [#EnglishTourismWeek20](#) tag us [@VisitEnglandbiz](#). Full details can be found at <https://www.enjoystaffordshire.com/trade/what-we-do/business-support>

Thank you

[#Stay Alert](#) | [#Control the Virus](#) | [#Save Lives](#)

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Health Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
01 June 2020

**Appendix 2 – Discussion Paper: CV-19 implications for the Health,
Wellbeing and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee**

Vulnerable Residents

1. The Government wrote out to the 2.2 million most vulnerable residents across the country giving them advice on how to stay well. In Staffordshire, it is understood that there are 36,887 people in the Extremely Clinically Vulnerable category, of which 4,416 reside in the borough. Staffordshire County Council are offering assistance to approximately 130,000 other vulnerable residents, who are over 70 and/or have a serious health condition but who have no alternative family or friends to offer support with urgent personal care or obtaining food or medicine.
2. The Borough Council and our partners at the Realise Foundation and Support Staffordshire acknowledge that there are a number of other vulnerable groups within our community, who may not have care and support needs but may be self-isolating or struggling for a variety of reasons as a result of the Covid-19 virus and need to ask for help from others. Assistance such as help getting shopping, walking the dog or even being put in touch with local community groups or someone to talk to is available. It is recognised that already a number of community groups have already been established to try to respond to others in need in their neighbourhoods and that support is being made available for these from Support Staffordshire.
3. The Realise Foundation has created a website portal for the Borough to co-ordinate activity locally and offer assistance to those in need, working with volunteers and voluntary sector organisations to ensure that the people of Newcastle-under-Lyme are supported, protected and kept well-informed. This network will co-ordinate the response locally to ensure that everyone who needs help can receive it.
4. To assist the website function the Council created a complimentary COVID 19 call centre staffed by volunteers from our leisure services team. A range of vulnerability themed scripts have been created to assist staff in giving relevant and appropriate information and signposting to callers, including money advice and financial hardship, domestic abuse, social isolation, safeguarding, housing and homelessness, and food deliveries.
5. The Borough Council are continuing to assist more complex cases and other vulnerable households with partners through the work of the Daily Vulnerability Hub, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and the Newcastle Housing Advice Service. There has been an increase in cases being referred into the Daily Vulnerability Hub.
6. The Council is contributing to a number of pan Staffordshire task groups, which have been established to co-ordinate activity that is supporting and managing assistance to vulnerable households. These groups include the Civil Contingency led Staffordshire Resilience Forum Vulnerability and Voluntary Support Group and the Police led C-19 Safeguarding, Vulnerability and Partnerships sub group and Domestic Abuse task group.
7. Staff unable to work in their usual setting have been temporarily reassigned to support the vulnerability hub which has provided a vital resources to vulnerable residents, giving advice and guidance as well as arranging care packages and delivering prescriptions and other essential items.

Domestic Abuse

8. Police advise that there has been no noticeable increase in demand in relation to reporting of domestic abuse, but they are preparing for a potential increase which is likely to come through over the next few weeks as people are able to leave their home and contact support services more easily. Presently the majority of the incidents received are low level, however there are concerns that these could escalate into something more serious as the lockdown continues, which reflects the national picture.
9. The weekly Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), at the time of writing had six cases heard at the meeting this week and the numbers have remained pretty consistent.
10. New Era, the County domestic abuse service commissioned by Staffordshire Commissioner's Office, report that there has been an increase in referrals for service. The service is operating with a full complement of staff, working from home, and are making preparations for potential increase in provision. They report that there have been some front line barriers experienced with complications in accessing legal aid as self-isolation reduces the options to provide proof of identity.
11. GLOW, the provider of the Newcastle Children and Young Persons (CYP) service, who also own and manage the Elizabeth House Refuge, report that referrals are increased to all elements of their services. The Refuge staffing is stable and as at the time of writing it is full. They are offering predominantly telephone based support but visits will be undertaken if necessary and safe to do so. Schools are continuing to refer children and young people to the Glow CYP service, which is commissioned by the Borough Council on behalf of the Newcastle Partnership.
12. Officers are working closely with colleagues at Newcastle Housing Advice to monitor the situation closely. They are also working with partners to cost a dedicated accommodation model with specialist support for homeless households fleeing domestic abuse, as it is expected that demand may start to rise and exceed the temporary accommodation currently available.
13. Officers have prepared and shared information around available domestic abuse services for dissemination to staff and the wider public, which has been shared by our Communications Team. Staffordshire Commissioner's Office have also launched a County wide domestic abuse communications programme, which Officers have been sharing alongside the more local campaigning.

Housing, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

Private Renting

14. The government took early action to support renters by suspending any eviction activities and calling on landlords to be compassionate so that renters are protected in their home.
15. A key concern is the lack routine maintenance, essential repairs and safety checks during this time. Government Guidance states that work can still be carried out in people's homes where necessary, e.g. for safety reasons. However this is still dependant on the views of the household and contractor with each case assessed individually.
16. Routine, non-urgent housing visits are suspended however we are responding to requests for advice and support. We will undertake visits if the situation deems it necessary, the household are in agreement, social distancing can be observed and that we have any necessary PPE.
17. The Health and Safety Executive and Gas Cert Register have both put out advice to landlords on gas safety certificates and we are following this in giving advice.
18. Government advice for landlords, tenants and Councils has been added to our website pages. It has been emailed to our landlords who are part of the Landlord Accreditation Scheme, to our HMO licence holders and landlords for whom we have e mail details.

Disabled facility grants

19. This service is provided by Millbrook Healthcare on behalf of the Council. Most customers are in vulnerable groups so only emergency works are being carried out where they can be done quickly and with minimal site presence i.e. stair lifts. Applications are being worked up to approval where this can be done without site visits.
20. A key issue is planning our recovery as there will be a build-up of work but no new contractors, there may be supply chain issues, costs may increase, and contractors will have to change current procedures starting and finishing in one house before cleaning equipment etc. and moving to the next. Millbrook Healthcare are being asked to carry out measures now to maintain the supply chain.
21. Millbrook are funded by fees on completed grants. As no grants are being completed Millbrook have no income and may need to furlough staff. This will significantly affect recovery. The County Council has sought to address this by agreeing to pay part fees on grants which have been worked up to the approval stage, and to fund purchases of materials which can be stored in readiness for when works can start again ensuring that supplies are available. This Council will support this by processing these claims against the individual grants.

Empty homes

22. We had a few empty homes where works were on site. Most have now been suspended. Communication is being maintained with owners to ensure this isn't an excuse for longer than necessary delays for returning them to use.

Caravan sites

23. We have one large site with permanent residents and owned holiday units. We have been in touch with the site owner, they are coming together as a community helping each other and reporting no concerns at the moment.

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

24. This service has continued to operate with a full complement of staff working from home. The homelessness and housing options service is delivered for the Council by Midland Heart assisted by the Council's Housing and Partnerships Team and the Safe Recovery service, the latter supporting, in particular, cases presenting with the most complex needs. There has been an increase in demand for service as households have not been able to move into new accommodation as landlords have not been letting homes.
25. The Rough Sleepers Team are operating as normal, at full capacity, carefully observing social distancing good practice. There has been an increase in demand for the service across North Staffordshire, again due to the lack of move on accommodation, but it is currently unclear how much this has increased specifically in Newcastle because of the transient nature of the cohort.
26. Particular pressures arose at the end of March when the Minister for Local Government and Homelessness wrote to all local authorities asking them to urgently accommodate all rough sleepers to try and mitigate the spread of the pandemic and the disproportionate effect of the pandemic on that Cohort. Local authorities were advised to use third party accommodation providers to comply with this request, where necessary, including local hotels and bed and breakfasts.
27. Rough sleepers and those living in temporary accommodation are disproportionately affected by the pandemic because of complex needs such as mental health issues and substance dependency, compounded with the additional challenge this cohort faces with being able to self-isolate effectively. As a result, our primary concern was to secure accommodation for everybody who is rough sleeping (regardless of local connection, immigration status, eligibility or priority need), to provide somewhere where they can self-isolate, if necessary, whilst obtaining appropriate support for individuals' particular needs.

28. Despite the powers and additional funding made available from the Ministry, this has been an extremely difficult task. Most hotels and bed and breakfasts have either closed for business or were only prepared to accommodate key workers or people not suffering from substance misuse or mental health issues.
29. After extensive research and negotiation, temporary accommodation placements for rough sleepers were made at a local Bed and Breakfast which has assisted the Council with this cohort for a number of years, and at its sister establishment in Stone, when the local site was fully booked. In particular, four rooms were made available as COVID-19 self-isolation rooms, to be used in the event of any rough sleepers reporting or presenting with symptoms.
30. Recognising that bed and breakfast is not sustainable for rough sleepers and other complex needs cases, the Council worked with local charity Open Door to create a 7 bedroom temporary accommodation unit, which is staffed by support workers 24/7. The unit is situated in Stoke-on-Trent, as a suitable property in Newcastle couldn't be identified at short notice. It was mobilised on Monday 13th April.
31. Other temporary accommodation is also being used at a local motel, for other homeless presentations. There are a further two shared supported houses used to transition individuals into independent accommodation. Families who present as homeless are able to access two 2 bedroom temporary accommodation properties owned by Midland Heart.
32. At the time of writing, there are 5 households in B & B accommodation and 15 in the various temporary accommodation properties, whilst the Housing Service continues to assist the households and investigate their circumstances.
33. Officers are aware that demand for temporary accommodation is likely to continue in the coming weeks and are working closely with partners to develop more housing options and support plans to move people on to more suitable accommodation where possible. There have been some issues with housing providers ceasing to turn over void properties and make lettings but these seem to be being addressed and worked through on a one to one basis.
34. The Furniture Mine, a local charity helping homeless households with furniture and white goods, have advised that they have closed for business, which may have a knock on effect when trying to move people from temporary accommodation into a permanent tenancies. Officers have been liaising with the Furniture Mine to ensure that the remaining furniture stock can be accessed if required.
35. Officers have developed a similar scheme, using homelessness prevention funding, to pay for a furniture pack to set a homeless household up in a tenancy and move them from temporary accommodation. Although there is an initial financial outlay for this it will save the cost of continued B & B in the longer term for some and therefore present a longer term saving.
36. A review of the support packages and supported accommodation provided to homeless households will be completed over the forthcoming weeks to ensure that the provision meets the statutory legislation and Covid guidance as this is amended going forward

Customer Services

37. Within 24 hours of Government issuing the lock down instructions, the Council established a dedicated helpline to assist vulnerable members of the public. Operated by staff who were transferred from the Jubilee 2 team, the helpline worked in partnership with both the NHS and Staffordshire County Council services, referring vulnerable people to the best source of assistance. Significantly, the helpline also operated in partnership with the Realise Foundation – who co-ordinated service to assist residents who were not on the NHS Shielded Patient list and, who were not eligible for assistance from Staffordshire County Council. The helpline was available from 9am to 5pm, 7 days a week and a voicemail service operated outside of these times. One notable intervention occurred over a Bank

Holiday weekend, where a re-trained member of J2's staff received and responded to a call where a caller was worried about their supply of insulin. The member of staff concerned collected the prescription and delivered it to the caller in a matter of hours.

38. The service only received around 10 calls each day – except on Mondays which was typically busier, despite being open at the weekend. The weekend service was discontinued two weeks ago, as less than 2 people per day were making use of the facility. Call volumes to the helpline are now tapering off and it is unlikely the service will be required for much longer. Since its introduction, the helpline service has assisted 722 customers.

Bereavement Services

39. The Bereavement Services' response to the Covid-19 situation has been one of continued response to changing government guidance and legislation, whilst keeping both funeral directors, families, and other service users up dated with the relevant changes and still providing a dignified funeral service.
40. Some of the changes include increased cleaning between services, which has been facilitated with the support of staff from J2. A reduction in the number of funeral attendees was implemented to ensure that social distancing can be maintained both within the Crematorium chapel and at graveside services. To ensure that the service can continue to meet the demand of the increased number of funerals, times have been adjusted to allow up to 14 services per day at the crematorium, with the cremator operators working shifts to allow for the additional times, and support from the landscape and community team with the chapel attending duties.
41. Due to the restrictions on numbers of those able to attend funerals, the Bereavement Services' team, with the support of ICT, have installed the facilities to enable webcasting from the crematorium chapel. The Obitus system enables those who are unable to physically attend a funeral the ability to view the service remotely.

Cultural and Leisure Provision

Jubilee 2

42. Like many services, the Council's sport and leisure function has been significantly disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. Not only did all the facilities at Jubilee2 close on 20th March, but all community centres and sports clubs across the Borough also closed.
43. This has created multiple challenges for our workforce, volunteers, and members of the public. With social distancing, self-isolation and sanctions on daily life, the task of keeping the Borough active and healthy is arguably more important now than ever before. Without access to our facilities we are having to be more creative and versatile in our work, for example by providing instruction for exercise at home and developing on-line content and classes.
44. In addition, throughout this time a proportion of staff have been redeployed to other Council frontline services, including staffing the vulnerability helpline, supporting the crematorium and providing additional capacity in waste services.
45. The opportunity has also been taken to carry out the outstanding roof repairs at Jubilee2 and re-visit plans for the stripped out health suite.
46. With the Government's ambition to re-open leisure facilities no earlier than 4 July, the complete process of recovery and the service's approach will be influenced by the guidance at national level from central government and informed by learning from others including advice from the leisure sector (Sport England, UK Active and the Chartered Institute for Sport and Physical Activity) as well as local partners.

47. In terms of safely lifting lockdown in our leisure facilities, it is anticipated that our communities will be living with the virus in the population, so social distancing has to be maintained, most likely until a vaccination is available. This assumption forms the basis for the developing Jubilee2 recovery plan, which can be adopted for opening other leisure facilities safely.

The Brampton Museum

48. The museum closed on 19th March 2020. Visitor numbers in that week had been very low. Much of the focus has been on continuing to catalogue and digitise the collection so that it is available on line, maintaining Facebook posts whilst closed to engage the public and continuing to work on the extension project for a new gallery and education space. All grant funding has now been approved and a total of £400,000 reached. Staff, as well as undertaking on-line CPD training, have researched the History of the House & Museum for a new display and timeline for a new gallery including objects and directed volunteers in researching notable people for Newcastle 850.
49. An online home education resource was created for Florence Nightingale's 200th birthday on 12th May, looking at her legacy with healthcare and other epidemics/pandemics that have affected locally. The design and research for the new museum education workshop programme is being undertaken as well creating outreach workshops that can be delivered between the end of lockdown and the re-opening of the new spaces in the museum.
50. Plans for new gallery and the new craft space are being developed, as well as the option to provide and offsite service at Lancaster Buildings (subject to situation conditions). Contact is being maintained with artists to supply work for the shop, and online events - Lockdown Art exhibition and local artist/maker profiles/interviews are in preparation.
51. Free printable educational crafts are also offered via Facebook and also using the #heritage at home tag. An artists A-Z section is being developed where any artists who have been involved with the museum and art gallery can share their website on a listings page if they wish. The COVID lockdown is also being recorded photographically for the museum archive/collections.

Parks and Open Spaces

52. Government guidance has remained consistent throughout the lockdown period, in that parks and open spaces are important to enable people to exercise and enjoy the outdoors, which contributes to physical and mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, the Council's parks and open spaces have remained open and available for our communities to use throughout the period of restrictions for activities such as walking, running, cycling and dog walking, which can be undertaken whilst observing social distancing requirements.
53. Some facilities within parks have had to be closed, such as children's play areas, tennis courts, bowling greens, football and rugby pitches, changing rooms and toilets as these activities could not safely continue to be used while observing social distancing and cleansing requirements. Also, in consultation with Staffordshire Police, car parks at Bathpool Park and Birchenwood were closed due to concerns relating to the potential for people to drive some distance to use these parks, which would have been contrary to guidance. Essential safety inspections of play areas, trees and other facilities continued on their normal frequency, along with periodic patrols, and it appeared that most people were using parks and open spaces responsibly and observing social distancing.
54. For the initial part of the lockdown period, grounds maintenance operations in parks and open spaces were suspended as they were considered to be non-essential services, and significant numbers of Streetscene staff were redeployed into supporting the Recycling and Waste Collection service, as well as focusing on street cleansing activity. However, as messaging about the importance of parks and open spaces grew stronger from Government, it became clear that to enable our communities to access and enjoy our parks, a reasonable level of grounds maintenance was required, particularly at larger, strategic sites. Therefore, operations resumed in these areas in late April.

55. More recently, government guidance has allowed for the reopening of certain sporting facilities where social distancing guidelines can be followed, including tennis and bowls, and the Council has responded by reopening these areas where appropriate. Children's' play areas remain closed for the time being, as do changing rooms and toilets.

Community Centres

56. Following the announcement from Central Government that public facilities, including community centres, should close, Officers have offered assistance to management committees to ensure that they are able to:

- a. Communicate with their users advising them that the centres will remain closed.
- b. Undertake building inspections and how to report and concerns to the Council.
- c. Reduce their operating costs through minimising the use of their utilities.
- d. Be prepared for the Council's continued statutory inspections of community centres.
- e. Apply for business grant support

57. At this stage, it is too early to identify what the process of reopening the community centres may look like until further government and or industry advice is received. However, at the appropriate time Officers will support the management committees of the community centres by:

- a. Ensuring that they are informed of any guidance notes and how to implement these. We are working with the organisation Community Matters in this regard.
- b. Support management committees to develop appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of work prior to opening community centres.
- c. Develop a generic communications for community centres advising their communities what approaches have been adopted to ensure that the community centres are safe to use.
- d. Support the management committee's in their marketing activities although they would need to incur any costs associated with this.

Member & Officer Wellbeing

58. Prior to lockdown, all reasonable and prudent measures were taken in line with government advice in terms of the applying the advice about self-isolation if returning from certain destinations, or if symptomatic. Advice on protective hygiene measures was given through a communications campaign and measures taken to increase cleaning and the availability of wipes/hand sanitisers in council buildings and vehicles. Assessments were undertaken to identify and protect vulnerable staff, and to plan for likely absences or unavailability on account of caring commitments. In some service areas, full-scale working from home was trialled and implemented before the formal Government lock-down was imposed.

59. Since the start of lockdown, NULBC teams have been working hard to support both the physical and mental health of staff. Daily Incident Management Team meetings have been receiving reports from across the organisation on the health (particularly suspected and confirmed CV-19 cases), wellbeing and attendance of staff to ensure service continuity and planning, but also to ensure the wellbeing (as far as the council is able to) of every member of staff. Where service delivery has transferred to staff working from home it has, almost without exception, operate no less effectively than prior to the lockdown and has, in a number of areas, operated more efficiently. The Planning Service, in particular, has received feedback praising it for continuing to conduct business and hold committees in circumstances where other authorities have ground to a halt.

60. Recognising that working from home or in different ways can impact on staff, the communications team have sent regular advice to staff regarding developing a healthy routine, healthy eating and keeping active. Advice has been shared both by email and on the organisation's intranet pages.

Additional IT and office equipment has been provided, where required, for home use to ensure similar levels of comfort and safety for those working from home (chairs/screens etc.). It has also enabled instantaneous and ad hoc “face to face” contact between team members which essential for monitoring and maintaining wellbeing and morale, but also enables the process of team meetings, 121s, supervision and organisational culture to be maintained (and in some cases improved) despite widespread working from home.

61. Where staff have been required to continue to work on site, Risk Assessments have been undertaken to ensure safety which has resulted in changes to some operational models, for example, changes made within Waste and Recycling services to limit the number of officers working in a single cab at any one time. Additional Personal Protective Equipment has been sourced, additional cleaning regimes and resources (such as hand sanitisers and wash facilities) have been put in place to ensure the safety of staff.
62. We have recognised that the lockdown has impacted on people in different ways depending on their personal circumstances and home lives and as such may need to work more flexibly and at different times of the day. There has been a particular emphasis on flexibilities around those with caring commitments, and those themselves shielding in vulnerable groups. We have suspended the flexitime and core-hours scheme and promoted an ethos of trust and confidence.
63. The council has signed up to VIVUP, an online wellbeing platform which provides staff with free access to health and wellbeing advice as well as access to a 24/7 phone line should people need some support with their wellbeing at any time. In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Week, the council has asked staff to celebrate positivity and share examples of times that a colleague’s kindness has helped them feel supported.
64. Member wellbeing has been accommodated by ensuring that member needs are met without the need to attend council offices. Measures include postal re-direction, responding rapidly to direct requests for assistance, close ICT support and early, successful adoption of video conferencing technology to allow all decision-making bodies to continue to meet remotely. Those measures will continue, as appropriate, and in light of prevailing regulations, government advice and technical capabilities to ensure the safe participation of members in council and committee meetings as far as is reasonably practicable.
65. As we consider a move to a recovery model, departmental Risk Assessments are being produced in partnership with Trade Unions to ensure that any sites and services looking to re-open do so in line with Covid-Secure requirements. Furthermore, as officers return to the workplace, individual Risk Assessments will be undertaken where necessary, to account for a diverse range of personal circumstances including vulnerability of the individual or any householders. We will continue to review our wellbeing work stream to ensure that the needs of staff are met accounting for flexible circumstances. We will also continue to support working from home in all appropriate cases in recognition of the improved bio-security that offers, prevailing government advice, the need to implement effective social-distancing in the workplace whilst seeking to maintain and capitalise upon a number of newly discovered or proven digital efficiencies that have been realised through a sustained period of wide-spread home working.