

**Cheltenham Borough Council**  
**Cabinet – 7 July 2020**  
**Covid-19 Recovery Strategy**

<b>Accountable member</b>	<b>Leader of the Council, Councillor Steve Jordan</b>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	<b>Chief Executive, Gareth Edmundson</b>
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Key/Significant Decision</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>Covid-19 has presented a challenge to Cheltenham Borough that it has not seen since the Second World War. The impact on our economy, our communities, our Borough and our Council will be significant and long lasting.</p> <p>In May, the Cabinet was presented with a Draft Recovery Strategy. The intention of the draft document was to set a an ambitious framework for Cheltenham’s recovery and to support the rebuilding and reshaping of our Borough to ensure that it is an even better place to live, work and visit in the years ahead.</p> <p>The Cabinet agreed that the Draft Strategy should be put forward for public consultation and shared with a range of partners to receive comments and feedback to improve and amend the document so that it represents and reflects the views of our partners and community in our collective approach to recovery.</p> <p>Subject to agreement, the Recovery Strategy will be reviewed by a recovery group of officers - each with dedicated workstreams, led by the Executive Director of People and Change. Other key partners across Cheltenham and Gloucestershire will also be invited and involved in the delivery of the strategy where needed. It is proposed that a report is provided to Overview and Scrutiny on the recovery strategy and other relevant partnership Boards to review progress.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>The Cabinet:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. To note consultation on the Draft Recovery Strategy.</b></li> <li><b>2. To note the changes to the document as a result of engagement and feedback.</b></li> <li><b>3. To agree Cheltenham Borough Council’s Recovery Strategy in Appendix A.</b></li> <li><b>4. Delegate review of the Recovery Strategy to the Executive Director People and Change as part of wider recovery group of</b></li> </ol>

**officers and partners under specific workstreams.**

- 5. Provide a report on the Recovery Strategy to Overview and Scrutiny and other local or county-wide partnership boards and meetings where appropriate.**

<p><b>Financial implications</b></p>	<p>The full impact of Covid-19 is as yet unknown. So far Cheltenham has received a total of £1.21m in funding from Central Government to cover both the impact of increased expenditure and loss of income that have been identified. Further announcements from the Government are expected on a further funding settlement in July.</p> <p>As a result, the Council's financial sustainability remains uncertain and will require close monitoring and potential intervention to ensure that the Council's short, medium and long term financial security is guaranteed.</p> <p>As a result, the ambitions set out within the Strategy may have to be prioritised or phased to ensure that the Council continues to take a prudent approach to manage and mitigate budget risks in the short and medium term.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk,</b></p>
<p><b>Legal implications</b></p>	<p>None at this stage but a wide variety of legal powers are available to support the delivery of the priorities set out in the draft Recovery Strategy including s1 Localism Act 2011.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: legalservices@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272017</b></p>
<p><b>HR implications (including learning and organisational development)</b></p>	<p>Many employees have been impacted as a result of Covid-19, this includes a reduction in regular duties as well as many staff being re-deployed. This will continue to be the case for an, as yet, undefined period going forward. It is unknown at this stage when the Council will be able to return to business as usual operation, however, significant work is being undertaken to manage and adapt to recovery from Covid-19.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: corry.ravenscroft@publicagroup.uk</b></p>
<p><b>Key risks</b></p>	<p>See appendix 2</p>
<p><b>Corporate and community plan Implications</b></p>	<p>The Recovery Strategy for Cheltenham aims to complement and support but not replace the existing Place Vision, Corporate Plan and other strategic documents produced by partners.</p>
<p><b>Environmental and climate change implications</b></p>	<p>The Covid-19 recovery plan offers a significant opportunity to expedite and invest in projects and other initiatives that may support Cheltenham achieving its climate change targets. This has been reflected by strengthening the theme of responding to the climate emergency within the Recovery Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Property/Asset Implications</b></p>	<p>Cheltenham's Recovery Plan may have implications for the use and function of some Council assets. However, this is, as yet, unknown.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Dominic.Stead@cheltenham.gov.uk</b></p>

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Covid-19 has tested Cheltenham's communities, economy and way of life in a way that hasn't been seen since the Second World War. Our Borough has lost loved ones, business has been severely impacted and we've all had to re-learn a new existence that tries to retain our human connections while being apart. We continue to give our grateful thanks to the thousands of workers and volunteers in front-line services and businesses who worked tirelessly to respond to this national crisis and are now supporting the gradual progress of recovery both in Cheltenham Borough and nationally.
- 1.2 At Cabinet held on 14 May, the first ever virtual public meeting held in the Cheltenham Council's history, it was agreed that the presented Draft Recovery Strategy – A Local New Deal for Cheltenham, should be offered for public consultation and that partners would be offered the opportunity to engage and give feedback on the contents of the draft document. After consideration of consultation feedback, it was agreed that an amended strategy would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting to be formally ratified.

## 2. Consultation and Engagement

- 2.1 Following the Cabinet meeting on 14 May, the Draft Recovery Strategy was publicly available on the Council's website and social media channels to allow for public comment. It was also circulated extensively to all key partners and stakeholders across Gloucestershire, regionally and nationally. The circulation to stakeholders included (not an exhaustive list):
  - Commissioned partners (e.g. Cheltenham Trust)
  - Local Economic Partnership
  - Cheltenham BID
  - Local and regional Councils
  - Local Government Association
  - Government departments
  - Gloucestershire Voluntary & Community Network
  - Culture Board
  - Parish Councils
- 2.2 In addition to the document being circulated to partners and being publicly available, a debate was also held at Full Council in June specifically focussed on recovery to allow all Cheltenham Borough Council elected members the opportunities to share views on recovery and to suggest changes and improvements to the draft strategy.
- 2.3 Overall, the draft document has been positively received by consultees with many specifically supporting the ambitious vision and principles contained within the strategy and the collective commitment at Cheltenham Borough to support re-building and reshaping our economy and communities to be better than before. The majority of formal and informal feedback agreed that the Strategy provides a strong platform from which to drive recovery.

We are grateful for the constructive submissions we have received as part of the consultation. As a result, a number of key changes to the final draft have been made.

Key changes include:

- Strengthening our commitment to tackling the climate emergency and becoming carbon neutral. This includes acknowledging the challenging targets the Council has set in this

regard.

- Encouraging greater collaboration between sectors to stimulate greater creativity and ideas to reshape and revitalise our high street and open spaces.
- Recognise the role of culture and the development and implementation of a cultural strategy in recovery.
- Recognise the prominence of culture in supporting the immediate recovery of our borough's spaces and places to boost the economy and increase footfall.

### **3. Cheltenham Recovery Strategy – A Local New Deal for Cheltenham**

**3.1** The full Recovery Strategy can be found in **Appendix A**. However the document contains the following key principles and priorities:

#### **Principles:**

- We will ensure our decision making and investment takes into account our ambition for making Cheltenham Carbon Neutral by 2030
- We will achieve inclusive growth so all our communities can benefit and prosper from investments made in the borough
- We will continue to have a strong leadership role in investing for growth
- We will continue to be commercially focused where needed so that we are financially self-sufficient
- We will use data and technology and build on the foundations put in place throughout the crisis, including insight from our customers, residents, businesses and visitors, to help us make the right business decisions
- We will provide strategic co-ordination across Cheltenham's agencies, partnerships and networks to drive social and economic recovery
- We will invest in and develop our people so they can continue to provide excellent services to residents and are prepared to meet the opportunities and challenges ahead
- Action plans will underpin each of the priorities to manage delivery and to achieve the performance

#### **Priorities:**

- Revitalising and re-shaping our economy
- Improved wellbeing and creating strong communities
- A modern, efficient and responsive Council
- Working with our direct service delivery partners
- A secure financial future

## 4. Recovery Strategy Agreement and Implementation

- 4.1** The Executive Director for People and Change is the lead for Cheltenham's Recovery Strategy work-streams. The Executive Director will continue to coordinate officer meetings as needed to progress and implement measures as part of Cheltenham Borough's on going response. The officer group governance and structure is regularly reviewed to ensure the membership and work streams are fit for purpose and responsive to the changing demands of Covid-19 recovery.
- 4.2** The Leader of the Council is responsible for Cheltenham's Recovery overall and it is expected that at least one further report to Cabinet will be brought forward in the next year to provide a more detailed update on challenges and progress.

It is also proposed that a report on the recovery strategy is presented to Overview and Scrutiny for periodic review. The frequency of reporting will be agreed in consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It is also expected that the Recovery Strategy will be reviewed as part of wider partnership meetings across Gloucestershire with a focus on recovery from Covid-19.

<b>Report author</b>	<b>Contact officer:</b> Gareth Edmundson, Chief Executive Gareth.edmundson@cheltenham.gov.uk
<b>Appendices</b>	1. Draft Recovery Strategy 2. Risk Assessment
<b>Background information</b>	None

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
1	<p><b>Risk of not having a recovery strategy:</b> The severe impact Covid-19 had on residents, communities and businesses means the Council must have a clear strategy and plan to ensure its efforts have the maximum of impact to support recovery efforts of the borough and Gloucestershire.</p> <p>Having a clear focus on the approach to recovery will mean valuable and limited resources will be deployed on initiatives that will make the biggest difference.</p> <p>A clear strategy helps to inform decision making and alignment of resources</p>	GE	April 2020	5	1	5	SMART Action Plan and managed via Clearview  Senior Cabinet & Officer Sponsorship	Develop strategy Seek political support Gain feedback from strategic partners Once approved develop SMART action plan	May 2020	GE	No
2	<p><b>Recovery Strategy Implementation</b></p> <p>If the Council and its partners do not have effective governance then it is likely that recovery from Covid-19 will not be joined up and will risk duplication</p>	DK	June 2020	4	4	16	Reduce:  Clear internal governance and workstreams to monitor delivery.	Governance and workstreams established and regularly reviewed by the Executive Director for People and Change in partnership with other Executive	June 2020	DK	No

	and inefficiency.						These are regularly reviewed. Regular engagement and joint working with wider partners. Senior sponsorship with Cabinet	Directors, Chief Executive, workstream leads and Cabinet Members.			
3	<b>Financial risk</b> The current uncertainty relating to the Council's short and medium term budgets as a result of Covid-19 may impact the delivery of some measures in the recovery strategy.	PJ	June 2020	4	4	16	Reduce:  Regular review and engagement by Executive Director for finance. Identification of actions and measures in partnership with Cabinet Members to mitigate risk	Regular reviews of finances undertaken and submitted to MHCLG.  Engagement with LGA and wider sector on financial challenge of Covid-19.  Regular review with Cabinet Members	July	PJ	Forms part of wider financial risk on risk register.
<p><b>Explanatory notes</b></p> <p><b>Impact</b> – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical)</p> <p><b>Likelihood</b> – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability)</p> <p><b>Control</b> - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close</p>											

