



Appendix 1



Tewkesbury Borough Corporate Recovery Plan

Covid-19

2020



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Councillor Rob Bird, Leader of the Council



Mike Dawson, Chief Executive

“We recognise
that we need to
put our residents
and businesses at
the very heart of
our recovery plan”

Foreword

Covid-19 has impacted the world significantly, and has required a response at global, national and local levels. It is without doubt that we will be feeling the impact of Covid-19 for years to come, and throughout our recovery we will be supporting the work of the government to avoid further peaks of the virus.

We have been overwhelmed by the dedication shown by our members and employees in the response to this pandemic. The commitment to supporting and protecting our borough from this virus has been nothing short of fantastic - we have seen amazing flexibility, initiative and dedication in all aspects of service delivery and community support. The response of our communities has been admirable too - thanks to the help of volunteers and community groups, we have been able to offer vital support to all of our vulnerable residents across the borough.

This document outlines how we responded to the crisis and, in more detail, how we now need to gear up to recover from it. None of this has been done or will be done solely by ourselves - throughout this pandemic we have worked closely with a wide network across Gloucestershire to help limit the impact of the virus and support our residents in every community.

Our elected councillors of all political groups, have played a really important role in their wards by supporting their vulnerable residents and voluntary groups, as well as working closely with council officers to make difficult decisions and ensure what we are doing protects our residents and makes our borough safe.

The pandemic has reshaped how we operate. It has forced us into becoming a much more flexible and agile organisation - utilising partnerships, technology and creativity in a way that we have never done before. As this document outlines, we plan to build up from this work - identifying the successes that will help make us a stronger, and more prepared council than we have ever been before.

We have had recognition from the government that local councils need support to recover from this pandemic. We are still waiting for more detail on what shape this will take. What we hope for, though, is that once this pandemic has faded, that we move forward in a more financially stable environment so we can deliver this robust recovery plan alongside continuing to deliver our excellent value-for-money services.

We recognise that we need to put our residents and businesses at the very heart of our recovery plan, which is why we are using our Council Plan priorities to shape it. Sitting under our priorities, we identify clear and deliverable actions under the themes of 'refocus', 'recover' and 'rebuild'. We are being ambitious but realistic, and we draw on the significant and successful areas of work carried out throughout this pandemic.



“The council’s
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The council's response to Covid-19

The council’s response to Covid-19 has been unprecedented. We have had to adapt and respond to a fast-moving emergency in a way that we have never had to do before. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has created some unprecedented challenges, the council has been well placed to respond. Our Growth Hub, located within our council building, has over the last few years built up an excellent network of local business intelligence through the advice and support services provided. This has proved incredibly useful during the pandemic, allowing us to engage quickly and effectively with businesses, understanding how we can best support them across the borough.

Our housing, community services and community development teams have made a tremendous difference in terms of managing homelessness created as a result of the pandemic and supported thousands of callers through the countywide Help Hub Portal. Sharing our building with the Police, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Children’s and Adult Services has enabled a multi-agency approach to addressing many of the complexities arising from the pandemic. An excellent relationship with Places Leisure means we are well placed to support the recovery of Tewkesbury Leisure Centre, which is incredibly important for our business and for community activity and health.

Our strategic growth plans, particularly our Joint Core Strategy in partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucester City Council, well developed before the pandemic, now provide a solid foundation to help kick start economic recovery.

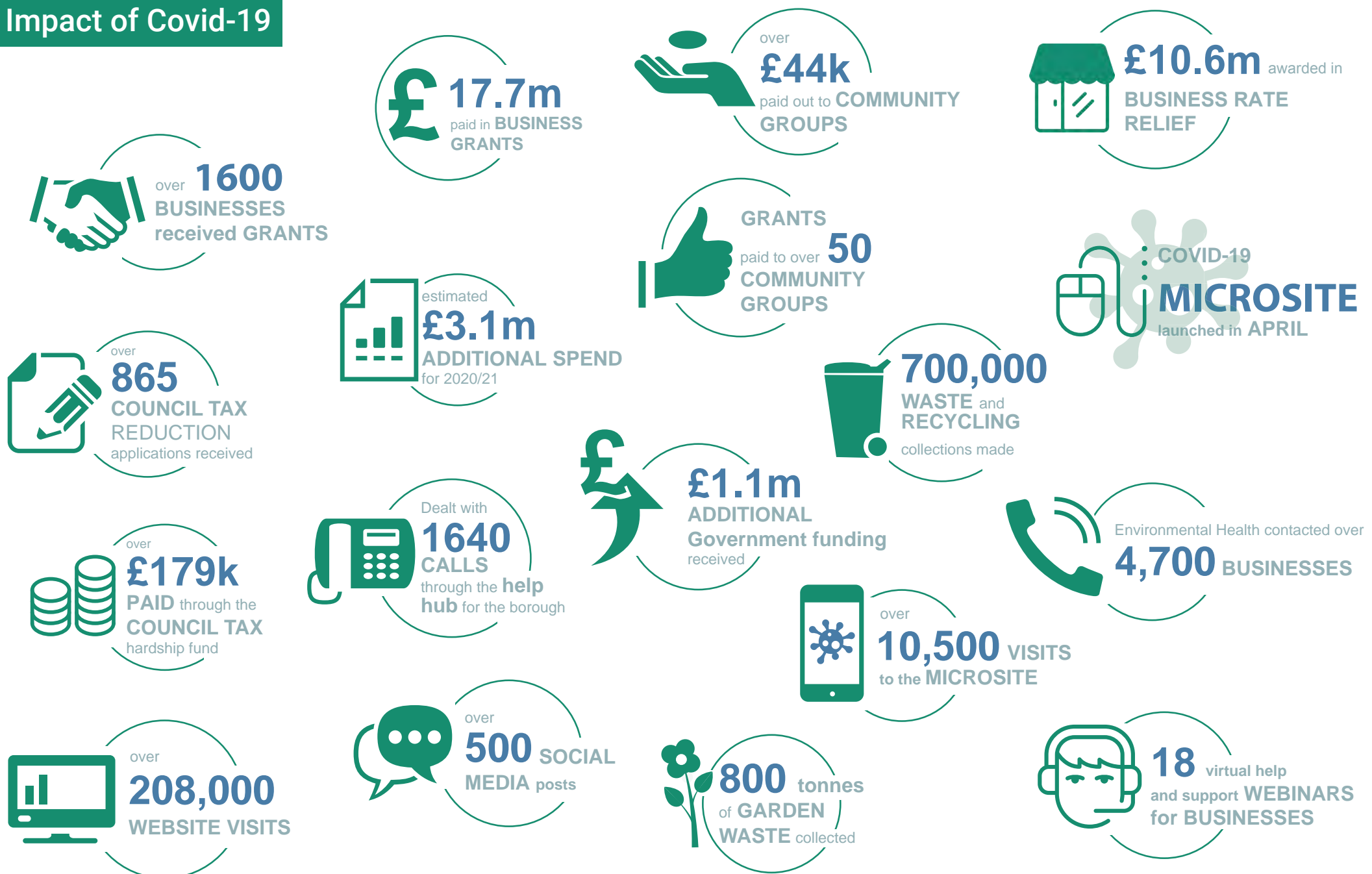
Organisational changes were made which saw many members of our staff redeployed to other services. The pandemic forced us to make huge changes to the way we deliver our services, our staff adapted quickly and have worked tirelessly to overcome these challenges and continue to provide essential services to our residents and businesses.

Undoubtedly, the pandemic will have a significant impact on our budget - not only for 2020-21 but for years to come. Before the pandemic hit, we were facing increased costs and reduced income, and while coping well with years of austerity - avoiding any service reductions - we were still waiting to hear the impact of the latest government budget, particularly around New Homes Bonus and government grant funding.

So far, we have been awarded £1.1m in additional funding from government to deal with the crisis but, given the significant additional costs we have incurred as a result of Covid-19, this falls short of what is required and we will continue to lobby government for more funding to limit the impact on our local services. We currently estimate we will need to spend an additional £3.1m in 2020/21. We have allocated, £500,000 to help meet recovery cost as a result of the pandemic. Officers will work closely with members to determine the best way to prioritise and allocate this funding, which could include additional staffing resource, investing in countywide recovery initiatives where there is a clear benefit to the council and communities in doing so, or continuing the work already started to help our local economies.

A snapshot of the impact of Covid-19 is shown on the next page.

Impact of Covid-19





“Our recovery plan will need to reflect the national approach”

Our plan to rebuild

Recovery plans will be created at national, regional and local levels and it is really important we recognise this interconnectedness, together with the role of working with our wide network of partners, so that we achieve a joined-up approach to our recovery.

Locally, our Corporate Recovery Plan will need to reflect the national approach of setting out the short, medium and long-term support needed to address the challenges associated with Covid-19. We will be doing this by considering the need to refocus, recover and rebuild communities, businesses and the voluntary sector.

- ✓ **Refocus:** reflects the short-term analysis of the implications of Covid-19. We will work closely with partners to understand how and what resources they need to be refocused and where opportunities to collaborate on emerging recovery plans can help us gain a better understanding of what recovery looks like.
- ✓ **Recover:** reflects the medium-term, primarily focusing on the creation of a Recovery Plan, that sets out the strategy and actions that will support businesses, communities and voluntary groups, allowing them to survive, stabilise and adapt to the challenges of Covid-19.
- ✓ **Rebuild:** reflects the longer-term measures required to allow businesses, communities and voluntary groups to rebuild and develop resilience to a post Covid-19 environment.

Our recovery plan details key actions, these will be monitored through the Corporate Recovery Plan performance tracker. More details can be found on page 11.





“The council is determined to meet its financial challenges”

Finance and resources

The pandemic has had a huge impact on our finances and will continue to do so for many years to come, we will continue to monitor the financial impact to the council. We have committed £500,000 to aid our recovery, but it is now more important than ever, that we ensure every pound spent by the council is spent efficiently and achieves maximum possible benefit to support our frontline services. The council is determined to meet our financial challenges whilst continuing to provide value for money for our residents and businesses.

To deliver this priority we will:

Refocus

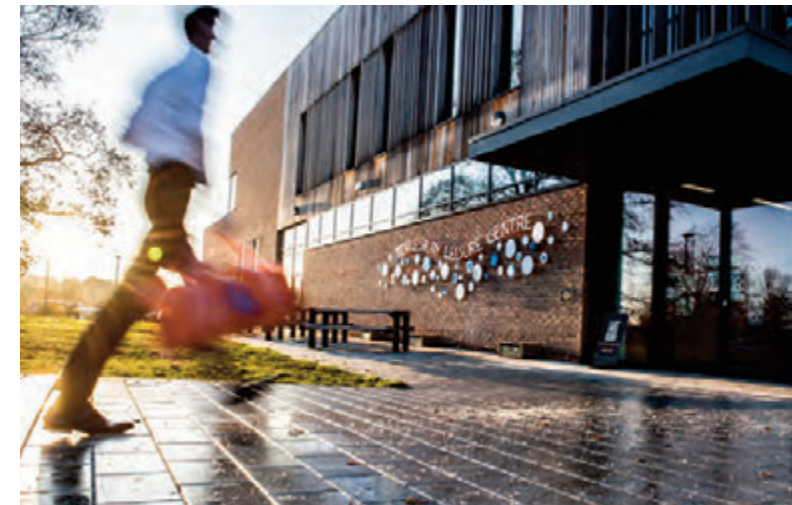
- a) Continue to work with partners to ensure adequate measures are in place on our High Streets to enable social distancing.
- b) Monitor the financial impacts of Covid-19.
- c) Produce a new six-monthly internal audit plan and review the whole suite of internal audit recommendations to determine if recommendations remain relevant and timescales for implementation remain feasible.

Recover

- a) Agree and monitor the Tewkesbury Leisure Centre recovery plan in partnership with Places Leisure.
- b) Ensure adequate measures are in place and government guidance is adhered to for those staff that need to return to the Public Service Centre offices, whilst exploring the future demand for space in light of new ways of working.
- c) Produce a revised 2020/2021 budget.

Rebuild

- a) Revise the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in light of additional financial pressures arising from Covid-19.
- b) Maximise the use of business intelligence within the council to ensure the accuracy of the rating list and help businesses build resilience.
- c) Work with businesses and residents and seek to rebuild council tax and business rate collection rates.





“Tewkesbury
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remains the
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Economic growth

Tewkesbury Borough remains the place to do business — and a focus for our recovery plan will be to utilise our Growth Hub so our current businesses, and businesses wanting to locate within our borough, are given the opportunity to thrive. We will work hard to promote our borough and its assets to visitors, to help support the future prosperity of the local tourism industry.

In addition, part of our economic growth recovery will focus on our role as an employer, and how we can look to work collectively with other councils, businesses and the voluntary and community sector, to support retraining, reskilling and placement opportunities/employment in light of the redundancies and decline in some sectors as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

To deliver this priority we will:

Refocus

- a) Review the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy to identify any actions required to respond to Covid-19.
- b) Undertake an economic impact assessment and analysis to understand the needs of local businesses.
- c) Work with our partners at Cotswold Tourism to understand when and how to safely encourage visitors back to the borough.
- d) Work closely with partners, businesses and groups to enable the safe and successful reopening of high streets and retail centres.

Recover

- a) Work with our partners to engage with businesses to create tailored business support solutions through Tewkesbury Growth Hub, as a single point of contact to support business recovery – helping businesses to recover, innovate and thrive.
- b) Deliver sector specific advice and events, helping support local supply chains.
- c) Work with partners to support employment and skills initiatives targeted at those affected by unemployment.

Rebuild

- a) Launch grant and support packages focused on innovation and growth, linking grants and Growth Hub advice.
- b) Support the revitalisation of the High Streets and retail centres across the borough, including delivery of the Tewkesbury Heritage Action Zone programme, to help drive economic recovery.
- c) Work with partners to identify funding opportunities and support key infrastructure projects.
- d) Promote Tewkesbury Borough as an excellent location for business and investment.



“We recognise the strain the pandemic has brought to our communities”

Housing and communities

We recognise the pressure the pandemic has brought to our communities and we will continue to work closely with partners to help ease this strain whilst also harnessing the skills our communities have to offer. We have focused our recovery plan to show our commitment to supporting those with a housing need whilst providing much needed support to our wider communities.

To deliver this priority we will:

Refocus

- a) Refocus the council’s Place Approach to reflect the issues within our communities arising from Covid-19.
- b) Assess the additional demand on those using the housing service, taking into consideration the county wide rough sleeper initiative.
- c) Work with landlords and tenants to assess the potential demand once restrictions are lifted.

Recover

- a) Support our communities to become more resilient and harness community spirit.
- b) Respond to localised outbreaks of Covid-19 quickly and effectively and in conjunction with the Gloucestershire County Council’s Local Outbreak Management Plan.

Rebuild

- a) Recognise and harness our relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector to support the building of resilient communities.
- b) Build on the Local Housing Needs Assessment and start developing the Tewkesbury Borough Housing Strategy for 2021 onwards.
- c) Consider future working arrangements within new communities to ensure there are adequate local businesses and self-employment hubs.





"We want to make it as easy as possible for our customers to contact and engage with us"



Garden communities

The garden community programmes reflect our commitment to delivering sustainable, well-designed and vibrant communities where people can live, work and raise families. Whilst the pandemic has caused minor delays our programme of work remains unchanged. We will continue to work with Homes England and other partners to develop plans for the Tewkesbury Garden Town and Cyber Central in Cheltenham. We are committed to improving transport links, education provision and green infrastructure, such as new parks and cycle routes which will play a big role in the development of these communities.

We have adapted the way in which we get messages and information to residents, after the events planned had to be cancelled. Our website - tewkesburygardentown.co.uk - is complete with all the information that is publicly available on the Ashchurch bridge project which will unlock land for the Garden Town. It includes the drawings, proposed location, and background information that would have been provided at the events. A letter has also been sent to residents in the Ashchurch and Northway areas to outline the project with local residents and provide details on where to find more information.

To deliver this priority we will:

Refocus

- a) Work with partners at Cheltenham to speed up delivery of the garden village site.
- b) Explore opportunities to enhance new digital jobs and training with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and partners at Cyber Central.

Recover

- a) Seek further government funding with our partners to support sustained delivery of the garden community programmes.
- b) Actively seek capital funding with our partners to support the programme.

Rebuild

- a) Work with partners to seek resolutions to infrastructure requirements around Junction 9 and Junction 10.
- b) Work with partners to maximise sustainable development and low carbon technologies as part of the Garden Communities programme.



"We will continue to work with Homes England and partners to deliver our garden communities"





“We recognise the ongoing importance of managing our carbon footprint”

Sustainable environment

Globally, the lockdown period of the pandemic has highlighted the impact people have on the environment. Moving forward, we recognise the ongoing importance of managing our carbon footprint and supporting our climate change declaration. The council has undertaken an audit of its current carbon footprint and an associated action plan setting out options and opportunities to reduce carbon associated with our buildings. Our Garden Town programmes provide good opportunities to explore low carbon technologies. We also know that minimising waste and increasing recycling is key to helping our environment flourish, and we will work with our residents to promote responsible recycling habits.

To deliver this priority we will:

Refocus

- a) Exploit the opportunities provided through agile working to enhance or accelerate carbon reduction and climate change initiatives.
- b) Work with our businesses and communities to support cleaner and greener living and working.

Recover

- a) Increase awareness in the effects of recycling contamination.
- b) Work with our communities to minimise waste to minimise the impact on our environment.

Rebuild

- a) Support the deployment of the carbon reduction action plan.
- b) Work on the Mixed Recycling Facility (MRF) contracted services procurement.
- c) Build on our communities' connections with green space, walking and cycling to encourage healthy, sustainable living and appreciation of biodiversity.





Governance and performance management

Our 2020-2024 Council Plan sets out our priorities for the next four years.

We will align our Corporate Recovery Plan with our Council Plan priorities and objectives. Sitting below the corporate plan, will be a number of dedicated service recovery plans, setting out the specific detail of what each service area, across the council, intends to do to support the short, medium and longer term recovery process. To monitor progress in delivering our recovery plan we will put in place a document called a 'corporate recovery plan performance tracker'. The tracker details each individual action, a feasible implementation date, accountable officer, a status column plus a comments column to provide an overview on delivery. This is a proven monitoring tool as the same methodology is used to monitor delivery of our Council Plan actions.

Similar to the Council Plan performance tracker the recovery tracker will be presented and scrutinised by the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. As there are synergies between both tracker documents, these will be reported alongside each other. So for example, if a council plan action is not progressing, it is likely this is being impacted by recovery work and there should be cross-reference between the documents.

The findings from the review of Overview and Scrutiny Committee are personally reported by the chair of the committee to the council's Executive Committee and remedial action taken when appropriate.

All members will play a really important role as the recovery process develops, particularly in terms of community support and community contact. Members have been instrumental in terms of helping to develop strong links with many businesses and voluntary and community groups during the pandemic. We need to capture this community spirit and use it to help in the recovery phases, together with the local knowledge that members have. By utilising our Council Plan priorities for the Recovery Plan framework, Executive Committee members will have a lead role in the recovery process as it relates to their portfolio.

Whilst Covid-19 has, and continues to present us with unprecedented challenges, we hope there will be no secondary local or national outbreaks however, we have to be prepared for this. We have a Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) overseen by the Director of Public Health at Gloucestershire County Council, that we would initiate should there be a need to do so. Our recovery plan needs to be dynamic and flexible, and actions may need to change, should there be a need to return to 'response' mode at any point in the future.

Should you require any further information about the recovery plan, please contact:

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