

COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING HIGHLIGHT REPORT

SERVICE AREA:	Resources
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REPORTING PERIOD:	To 6 June 2020

KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

Revenues and Benefits

- As of Sunday 7 June, we have made 98.45% (2,421 of 2,459) of payments to applicable businesses. Last week we had the 15 best delivery percentage out of 314 Councils.
- We have a draft policy for the additional £1.5m of discretionary payments we can make to business and charities. The major issue will be expectation management, as if the £1.5m was made as £10k payments it only covers 150 businesses, demand will be over 1,000.

The Registrars Service

- We now have approval from the Government to deliver Birth Registrations, and are ensuring the Registration Office is fully COVID-19 compliant for the safety of staff and customers before opening.
- Death registration appointments continue to be available within 1 to 2 days of request.

The Bereavement Service

- Appointments for cremations and burials continue to be well managed with no delays. Our local Key Performance Measure that states whether a funeral at the crematorium is available within 5 days of initial contact continues to be met throughout the pandemic.
- 79 cremation slots are available within the next 10 days as of 5th June. For Burials we have 2 funerals booked for next week and can accommodate a further 13 if required.
- Monthly cremation numbers for May were 226, which are 35 up from last May so overall this year so far we are 95 cremations up from the same period last year.

Property

- We have continued to undertake site visits to ensure currently "open" premises are compliant with government COVID 19 regulations and are working with the business where staff, as an exception, need to come back into the office to deliver their services.

Finance

- The Council has received almost £11m of support from the Government, but estimated costs are now almost £21m. The LGA provided high level feedback on May data on Friday.
- The Peterborough allocation of £600m funding linked directly to Care Homes is £1.75m.
- The 2019/20 outturn report will go to June Cabinet.
- Collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates are 6.9% and 28.3% down on last year at 31 May.

Procurement

- No new updates further to the revised COVID-19 procurement arrangements now in place.

RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

Finance, Revenues and Benefits:

- Ensuring staff continue to log expenditure linked to COVID-19 properly. We have an online form to log information. These reporting requirements now reflect updated MHCLG requirements.
- Managing expectations for the new discretionary Setting BEIS funding.

- We have seen significant reductions in the Council's commercial and tax income due to Covid-19 restrictions in April. This is being reflected in all monitoring returns with Tax income £5.1m less than that collected on 31st May 2019.

Bereavement and Registrars

- The number of attendees at a small number of funerals have exceeded the safe numbers to ensure Social Distancing. This is being managed by close working with a range of Partners.

Property and Procurement

- Undertaking risk assessments on Corporate Building following Government relaxation of Social Distancing in preparation for more users to potentially return to these buildings.

WORKFORCE UPDATE

No significant changes since last week. We have a number self-isolating in the working from Home figures.

Summary	Staff	Work at Premises	WFH and Enabled	In Hub	Notes
Council Staff	97	17	71	9	
Serco	95		95		
Other (NPS)	19	2	17		

FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

- The Council completed the May MHCLG monitoring return on the 15th May. Cost have now increased to just under £21m (not including Tax income). We now have a high level analysis of May figures delivered via the LGA on Friday but nothing further from MHCLG. The next response to MHCLG is 15 June.
- Tax income losses projected forward from May actual data could be £30m for the full year.
- We have had confirmation of an allocation of £1.75m of funding for Care Home protection and £181k for City Centre reopening.
- We are now at 98.45% delivery for BEIS Grants – 15th best of 314 LA's in the country last week. A new scheme starts in June.

RECOVERY ACTIVITY (plans being considered / future steps)

- The Cabinet Paper on the Councils financial position has a section that is linked to recovery. Areas we need to address include:
 - Financial monitoring delivery and validation in the recovery period and the remainder of the year (including budget preparation);
 - Alternative service delivery methods which Covid-19 has necessitated.
 - Effective lobbying of our financial position both through peer Councils, the LGA and MHCLG will be key – as will it's timing:
 - Planning the medium-term effects of COVID-19 including: Council Tax and Business Rates income reducing, suppressed external income, increasing demand for services, investment in regeneration schemes to "kick start" our local economy.
- Brexit in December. We must not take our eyes off this as it has the potential for significant impacts on both our economy and overall funding as well as the local economy.
- Notices to enable ceremonies to take place are valid for 12 months. Professional bodies are currently lobbying central government to extend this period to avoid notices having to be retaken.

COMMUNICATIONS

Nothing to report this week.