

Scrutiny COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY (PEOPLE) Task and Finish Group Scoping Document

1. Topic

- 1.1 **To consider current and emerging issues in relation to the Covid-19 Pandemic impact in relation to Finance, Mental Health & Physical Health and Wellbeing and Community and evaluate both the current and planned response by the Council and External Partners/Organisation to establish**

2. Purpose/Scope

- 2.1 The purpose of the review is explore evidence in relation to the topics below in order to establish if the current or planned response will meet the needs of the residents of the Borough and whether anything could be done differently or in addition to the current/planned response.

- 2.2 The following topic areas will be included:

i. Finance

- **Unemployment and welfare benefits**
(Incl. debt and Universal Credit)
- **Homelessness**

ii. Health

- **Mental Health**
(Social Isolation and digital exclusion)
- **Physical health and wellbeing**
(Director for Public Health Report on Covid-19 impact on BAME)
(Support for Leisure Centres)

iii. Community

- **Support Services**
(Council Services/External Organisations/Voluntary Sector)
- **Anti-social behaviour and community tensions**

3. Members

- 3.1 How many members? (Councillors/Co-opted)
5 Members of Scrutiny Committee (Chaired by Scrutiny Chairman)

4. Rationale

- 4.1 During discussion of the Scrutiny Work plan it became clear that Scrutiny members were keen to look at the local impact of the current national crisis created by the Covid-19 Pandemic in relation to the priority themes set out in the Corporate Strategy.

- 4.2 Support for the local community during and in the wake of the pandemic will be critical to the recovery process and therefore it is proposed that Scrutiny evaluate and analyse the response of the Council and external organisations.
- 4.3 The Task and Finish Group will collate and analyse evidence in order to identify lessons learnt and any areas of weakness in order to provide recommendations which might inform and improve the current response to the Covid-19 pandemic and also provide a template for dealing in with any future similar emergency situation.

5. Background

- 5.1 The review has been instigated by the Scrutiny Committee as a result of the current National Emergency and the need to adapt existing policy and practice and develop new policy and processes in order to provide a focused response to support the residents of the Borough during this time.

6. Timetable

- 6.1 How frequently will the Task and Finish Group Meet?
1 x Scoping Meeting (September 2020)
3 x Task and Finish Group Meetings (October/December/February)
(It is accepted that additional evidence sessions and informal member meetings will be necessary – these will be coordinated by the Chair of the Task and Finish Group)
1 x Summary of findings and final report/recommendations
- 6.2 Timing of meetings to be confirmed at the scoping meeting
- 6.3 The final report to be approved by Scrutiny Committee April 2021 and Cabinet/Council May/June 2021.
- 6.4 It is proposed that the review will commence in September 2020 until April 2021 (This timeframe could be subject to review)

7. Methodology/Approach

What method of enquiry will be most suitable for the review?

- Desk-based review of evidence
- Observation
- Comparisons with other authorities
- Task and Finish group meetings to consider evidence collated between meetings
- Informal member meetings
- Questionnaire/surveys to Parish Councils/Ward Members/Stakeholders
- Remotely Interview officers of Council and External organisations

- Calling witnesses to provide evidence and information (Through remote means)

8. Evidence Sources

What are the key lines of enquiry?

- Government guidance / legislation
- Service plans and policy
- Performance Indicators
- Evidence Peer Group and other local authorities
- Independent research articles and papers
- Contribution from Stakeholders and Partnership Groups
 - Melton Community Safety Partnership
 - The Community Hub
 - People Board

9. Witnesses/Technical Experts

A potential witness list might include:

- Service users/Members of the Community/Parish Councils
- Stakeholders/Interest Groups
- Cabinet Members
- External partners
- Charities and other voluntary organisations
- Professional/technical experts
- Service Manager/Senior Manager responsible

10. Other considerations

- There will be another Place based Response and Recovery Task and Finish Group running concurrently with this Group. In order to ensure there is sufficient resource allocated to each it is proposed that each group follows the same format of having one scoping meeting followed by 3 meetings which will focus on one of the three specified overarching themes.
- There will be a final meeting to summarise findings and any recommendations and look at the final report.
- It is accepted that there will be a significant amount of research between meetings and an action list be compiled at each meeting and circulated to members. These actions will be coordinated by the Chairman.
- The Scrutiny Function will continue during this period with formal meetings of the Committee.

- The Director for Housing and Communities and the Scrutiny Officer will support the task and finish group. Other officers will contribute as appropriate.