

Scrutiny Covid Sitrep Updates - October 2020 (information correct at 25 September 2020)

Communities & Equalities Scrutiny (2.00pm) - Thursday 8 October

Workstream	Issues and challenges experienced	Current position: Has recovery activity closed down (been mainstreamed / returned to BAU), or is continuing? Please give detail.
Residents at risk		
	<p>Shielded Residents and the Food Response (Communities)</p>	<p>Food Response community transition has been effective. Only 42 households still require food support on an ongoing basis</p> <p>Resourcing continues to be a challenge but plans are being developed to deploy staff from elsewhere in the Council to support the approach in the medium term.</p> <p>Preparation for any recommencement of shielding underway. Still awaiting final framework and self assessment from government, including any re-defined definition of shielding.</p>
		<p>Further consideration as to the role of food response (when not in lockdown / shielding) as a broker to community provision and to collate intelligence around the volume of need and whether this is being met.</p> <p>For those residents identified who require a broader support offer to help with other issues in their lives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those with children in the household should be connected effectively to the city's Early Help offer - Those with primarily health conditions should be connected to the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and multi-agency meetings in neighbourhood - Those with wider issues should be connected to the emerging multi agency prevention meetings as part of BST PIP. This will be raised at the BST city-wide meeting with partners on 28/9/20

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussions in place with key leads to ensure elements in place for Local Authority to manage support to those that are shielding.
	Domestic Violence & Abuse (Communities)	<p>DA providers report concerns about their ability to respond to increased demand for service without further funding in place. The DA helpline reports additional calls from friends and family seeking support for victims.</p> <p>DA providers adapting to new restrictions as quickly as possible to ensure safety for staff and service users</p>	<p>DA providers are continuing to plan recovery to ensure covid safe workplaces, covid safe refuges, covid safe children's service. Staff returning to normal duties as near to commissioned service as possible</p> <p>Recovery plans to be reviewed at the DA forum on 24th Sep and changes to activity will be considered in light of increased lockdown restrictions</p>
	Welfare Provision (Communities)	<p>We continue to administer referrals for goods through the carers budget we have received. Main issues we are experiencing are around unrealistic expectation of what can be provided within a limited budget. This needs to be discussed further with Care Managers who can help to manage a carers expectation.</p> <p>No current spike in referrals received</p>	<p>Aware that there may be a sudden spike in referrals due to the current revised lockdown rules. We still have HB visiting officers working within the team and therefore if there is a spike in referrals service levels can be maintained</p>
	Homelessness (Neighbourhoods)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding for covid hotels and accommodating people from the streets 2. Lack of move on accommodation for the 'everyone in' cohort 3. People are not engaging via electronic / telephone once placed in emergency accommodation, and we need to ensure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bid to MHCLG was partially successful and Manchester has received £2million towards accommodation, PRS access and some furniture for RP properties for the period to March 2021.

		<p>people in B&Bs are supported appropriately in a covid safe way, and HB forms are completed to maximise income.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Cessation on evictions continues to be a concern, as does people losing employment 5. Discharge of people to create hospital beds 6. Lack of space in the town hall to bring teams back as some teams need to be in the town hall full time. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Bid has been submitted for capital funding. We are still waiting for the outcome of the longer term funding. 3. Rooms have been identified in all emergency accommodation and screens erected. 4. Regular comms to encourage people to access advice early planned 5. Hospital homeless discharge team working closely with ABEN and covid hotels to prioritise hospital discharge 6. Utilising the customer support centre whilst a longer term option is found
Resilient communities			
	Resilient Communities	<p>Continuing to promote MCRVIP opportunities given the link to step down of food support. This will continue particularly if shielding is reinstated as MCRVIP is likely to play a part in providing support. Project Manager is due to leave the organisation and backfill arrangements are being made.</p> <p>BST work through the TANs continues and continues to make progress. Workshop on the 28th September will provide visibility of each Neighbourhood's priorities and understand blockages/ challenges that need to be addressed.</p>	
	Libraries, Galleries and Culture (Communities)	No new issues with the 20 open libraries.	New rules relating to Test and Trace data collection, and face masks being mandatory for staff being implemented in 24/9

	<p>A challenge being faced by the city is the level of digitally excluded people who are more vulnerable during the pandemic. People most likely to be facing this have one or more of the following protected characteristics: Elderly, first language is not English, disabled, low income.</p> <p>The number of volunteers offering digital support telephone calls is not currently sufficient to support the 400 chromebook donations successfully. We have advertised via MCRVIP and Macc, and working with partner agencies.</p>	<p>Device donation scheme is being progressed. Donations of 400 chromebooks with 6 months of Internet access will begin in mid-October.</p>
Parks, Leisure & Events (Communities)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Breaches of guidance/ measures relating to social distancing in community sports settings (non Council buildings). 2. Permissions for planned events in the Autumn and Winter. 3. High demand for online booking in leisure centre resulting in some level of failures or disruption to customers 4. Low uptake on the return to swimming lessons. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regular comms activity underway to reinforce the current guidance and targeted ongoing conversations with leagues and clubs where issues are arising. 2. A Briefing Paper is being prepared (24/9/20) for circulation to the Exec Member with recommendations on further event cancellations or curtailment over the next period. 3. A Call Centre has been mobilised to deal with additional volume and demand for bookings. 4. Further messages scheduled to go out this week to reinforce the COVID Safe and Secure measures in place within leisure centres.
Youth (Communities)	<p>Youth providers are still facing challenges from young people about the wearing of face coverings</p>	<p>Working with youth providers and comms to provide young people friendly messaging about</p>

		<p>within centres.</p> <p>Additional challenge is expected this week with the introduction of the NHS app for those over 16.</p>	<p>the benefit of wearing masks. Youth providers are also planning for more provision outside so that the barrier is removed.</p> <p>All centres are displaying the NHS QR code. Given the physical barrier preventing free entrance details are already collected for each person.</p>
<p>VCSE (Communities)</p>		<p>Ongoing communication and engagement with the VCSE sector, particularly around Covid response and recovery plans.</p> <p>Impact of Covid 19 on the VCSE sector (and those that they serve)</p> <p>VCSE future funding (both MCC and external) - Good range of emergency covid reponse funds made available but concerns around longer term funding of the sector e.g MCC OMVCS grant</p> <p>Covid Health Equity - communication and engagement with communities of identity</p>	<p>No further MCC (Residents & Communities) and VCSE update sessions scheduled at present - being picked up via BAU forums and networks.</p> <p>Macc (VCSE Infrastructure) has produced 'No going back' report brining together leaders of Manchester based charities to share their experiences of Covid 19 and their thoughts for the future - see link to report below https://manchestercommunitycentral.org/news/%E2%80%9Cinvest-crucial-sector-or-risk-losing-it%E2%80%9D-say-manchester%E2%80%99s-voluntary-sector-leaders. Will be picked up via BAU</p> <p>Manchester VCSE funding partnership group set up and currently being supported by the OM Funds Team</p> <p>VCSE Covid Recovery Fund being developed by MCC, MHCC, Young and Manchester and Macc (£700k) due to launch in Autumn and will be managed via BAU - OM Funds governance.</p> <p>Participation and engagement grant being developed with VCSE partners. This will continue</p>

		via the new Covid Health Equity workstreams (new normal)
Equalities and Inclusion (Communities)	<p>1) The Council's work to align its Covid recovery planning with the Our Manchester Strategy (OMS) reset continues. The Council has been working to ensure that its engagement on the reset is broad, inclusive and represents a diversity of views and voices.</p> <p>2) Digital Inclusion is being progressed as a cross cutting priority; this work pre-dates the Covid-19 outbreak, but has gained scrutiny and momentum in recent months. Feedback and research highlights issues around affordability of devices and data as priority areas for attention, along with the physical accessibility of technology and web content.</p> <p>3) Equality and inclusion is a cross-cutting priority across the recovery planning workstreams.</p>	<p>The reset has included engagement with residents, businesses, organisations and partnership boards. The public online survey closed on 23 September with over 3,000 responses. A range of targeted engagement was undertaken to ensure the views of harder to reach groups and those without digital access were also heard.</p> <p>Work is under way to review the Customer Service Organisation (CSO) offer and delivery. This involves making remote services an accessible norm, through improved digital tools. Focus groups have been held to assess the key access considerations and options, including older residents, disabled residents and residents whose first language is not English. The CSO accessibility appraisal will be supplemented by engagement with key stakeholders to stress-test the proposals.</p> <p>The Council's revised Covid-19 EIA approach will underpin specific activities. The Covid-19 Equalities Overview report will be reviewed and key learning from the first wave fed into the relevant workstreams. The Council will continue to link with health partners through a range of forums. Highways are establishing a disability access reference group, similar to that operated by TfGM, to consult on, test and co-design accessibility options in the City Centre. First meeting being planned for Oct / Nov. Similarly,</p>

	<p>4) With the recent increase in Covid infection rates across the UK and in Manchester, the focus is on supporting communities and employees at greatest risk, with a</p> <p>5) Consideration is being given to the impact of Covid on the Council's finances and forward plans being developed. This needs to be managed in such a way as to avoid adverse impacts for protected groups in communities and in the workforce.</p>	<p>the Council's response to the GM BIG Disability Survey will be reviewed to ensure that its main points are considered in the Council's ongoing Covid response.</p> <p>As above, the Covid response work is being further developed with a particular focus on people who were previously shielding, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups, disabled people and those living with long term conditions and older people.</p> <p>In the event that the Council's financial challenges should require consideration of workforce reductions, it will be important that this impact is assessed to ensure it is managed fairly and equitably. It will be important that any actions are not counter to the Council's stated priorities around workforce inclusion, any staffing plans would need to align with the aims of the developing workforce equality strategy.</p>
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** There is clear evidence that COVID-19 does not affect all population groups equally. Many analyses have shown that older age, ethnicity, male sex and geographical area, for example, are associated with the risk of getting the infection, experiencing more severe symptoms and higher rates of death (*Beyond the Data: Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 on BAME Communities, PHE, 2020*). It remains vital that those who are frequently the most disadvantaged in society do not then take a 'double hit' from decisions taken to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Please include detail of the activity you are planning to undertake to ensure recovery activity considers the impact of COVID-19 on different population groups. For example, undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment to support the planning for longer term changes to service delivery.