

Report Title:	Interim Council Strategy 2020-21
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Lead Member:	Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet 30 th July 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. To reflect that as a result of the Covid19 pandemic the Council Strategy has been impaired and to outline the interim strategy the Council is following as a result.
2. To outline the thinking behind the need for an interim strategy, identify the objectives of such a strategy and highlight the need for a revised Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2020 and the following five years. This will include immediate changes to the shape of service delivery as a result of the pandemic and the opportunities that has afforded to achieve longer term change objectives.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the Interim Council Strategy 2020-21; and
- ii) Requests Officers to develop reports for relevant decision making bodies to progress the objectives therein.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Approve the Interim Strategy and develop reports to deliver its objectives.	This will allow the Council to be clear to the public, partners and our colleagues what we aim to do over the course of the financial year and offer a framework for prioritisation of resources and energy.
This is the recommended option	This strategy attempts to identify the areas of greatest priority for the Council including responding to the pandemic, delivery of key strategic programmes and projects and

Option	Comments
	managing the financial crisis Covid has created.
To reject the recommendations and requests a revised strategy is developed for future consideration.	This strategy has been developed in discussion with the Leader of the Council, senior managers and Leaders Board. Clearly other objectives could be pursued and if this option were to be taken then decision makers would need to explicitly suggest what alternatives they wished to see.
Determine not to implement a new strategy (do nothing option)	This would not allow clarity of resource allocation nor would it address the fact that the current strategy has become very 'dated' since its adoption.

- 2.1 The world is a very different place now than pre-Covid. The Council is currently working to deliver the 'Building a Borough for Everyone' Council Plan 2017-21. The objectives and policies associated with that plan drive operational planning and a number of different processes and documents – for example our communications plan, financial strategy, people plan – hang from this.
- 2.2 These objectives, whilst still important, are not as relevant in our current context and many have been delivered over the last three years such as, 'deliver services that protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm, use modern technology to benefit customers and staff and work with schools to ensure high-quality education for all.'
- 2.3 Other objectives are no longer relevant or have changed in a significant way because of the pandemic and its impacts. It makes little sense to continue with this overarching strategy when actual delivery and resources are being focussed in an entirely different way as a result of the pandemic and its impact.
- 2.4 Clearly the outcomes of our current strategy are still important for the future and unless resource reprioritisation affects them, they will continue - for example Maidenhead Regeneration, Borough Local Plan - but at this point in time it would help the organisation, by giving clarity, to identify the revised priorities we are responding to.
- 2.5 Currently there is a huge amount of resource being used to respond to managing the pandemic and recovering from the pandemic. This includes developing the Outbreak Plan, supporting care homes, managing a shielded cohort of nearly 3,000 people, supporting schools, bringing our services back on line in a safe and appropriate way, playing a full part in the local, regional and national response systems, supporting communities and visibly acting as a local leader, leading recovery work locally and regionally, helping people

affected in whatever way. Responding to and recovering from the pandemic is both a moral and legal obligation of the Council and it has been prioritised throughout the pandemic.

- 2.6 The Council has also recently received and considered or is considering several important reports whose objectives need to be delivered. Such work will not be properly embedded if the momentum associated with it is lost. These include the Climate Change Strategy, CIPFA Report on Governance and the wider council transformation strategy.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The key implications of adopting the interim strategy will be formally to refocus resources and activity on the current issues facing our communities and our organisation.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Adopt Interim Strategy covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid Response and Recovery • Council Priorities • Financial Strategy 	Not adopted	Adopted	Adopted with a significant improvement in our financial position	Adopted with the impact of the pandemic mitigated and a significant improvement in our financial position	31 July 2021

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications of the proposed recommendations. If a new Medium Term Financial Plan is approved that will change the budget position in due course.
- 4.2 Introducing a number of new objectives will shift resources towards those objectives, however this is largely happening anyhow. The obvious example of this being the pandemic where resources have been shifted to response and recovery without any strategic underpinning.
- 4.3 A range of different reports will be brought forward as part of the interim strategy outlining actions in support of the new strategic objectives. Each of these reports will included any resource implications associated.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has the powers to draw together a strategy explaining our overall approach to focusing resources on current priorities. It is not a requirement to

publish a strategy however it clearly is a helpful thing to do and allows both Members and officers to take ownership of their part in delivery. This is fully in line with our new values and empowers people to deliver against clear objectives.

- 5.2 The Council has a policy framework that lists strategies that by law must be approved by Full Council. A corporate strategy is not included in that framework so Cabinet is able to approve this strategy.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The risks and mitigations are set out in table 3.

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
Confusion as to objectives at either partnership or individual level	MEDIUM	Publicise the interim strategy to all colleagues and relevant partners with supporting material to explain individual roles	LOW
Previous objectives still being prioritised	HIGH	Management will ensure resource is focussed on the Interim Strategy, where previous objectives can still be delivered without affecting delivery of interim objectives; this is a good thing and will be supported.	MEDIUM
Appraisal system will not be responding to correct objectives	MEDIUM	All staff will be briefed on the Interim Strategy and any new objectives for colleagues will be added through monthly one to one sessions.	LOW
Financial positions will need to be reworked to support new objectives	HIGH	Part of the Interim Strategy is to prepare a new MTFP which would fully address this risk.	LOW

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Equalities. The Interim Strategy is particularly a response to Covid19 and it is established that there has been a disproportionate impact on BAME communities. Any work as part of the development of such objectives must consider this fully. The Council is also working to develop a meaningful response to the Black Lives Matter campaign and the murder of George Floyd. Time will be prioritised to support the entire workforce to work to address

issues from this work and embedding our new values, which also include a strong commitment to ‘embrace diversity in all ways.’

7.2 Climate change/sustainability. The Strategy prioritises the emerging Climate Change Strategy Action Plan.

7.3 Data Protection/General Data Protection Regulation. No direct impact as a result of this report.

8. CONSULTATION

As this report is in response to a major incident it has not been possible to consult substantially in advance. Discussion with Leaders Board and Group Leaders has taken place.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Implementation date if not called in: Immediately.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Interim Strategy

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is not supported by any background documents.

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Johnson	Leader of the Council	4/7/2020	8/07/2020
Russell O’Keefe	Director of Place	4/7/2020	9/07/2020
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources	4/7/2020	9/07/2020
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children’s Services	4/7/2020	9/07/2020
Hilary Hall	Director Adults, Commissioning and Health	4/7/2020	5/7/2020
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance	4/7/2020	9/07/2020
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	4/7/2020	6/7/2020
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	4/7/2020	-
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	4/7/2020	9/07/2020
Louisa Dean	Communications	4/7/2020	6/7/2020
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	4/7/2020	3/7/2020
Dan Brookman	Transformation and Systems Manager	4/7/2020	

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Non-key decision	Urgency item? No	To Follow item? No
Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director		

Interim Strategy in response to Covid19 Pandemic 2020-21



RBWM Current Strategic Framework

- Current strategic framework
 - Corporate Plan 2017-21
 - MTFS February 2020
 - Underpinning support strategies and plans
- New Strategic Framework
 - Borough of Opportunity and Innovation (under development during 2020, paused do to pandemic)



RBWM Covid19 Response/Recovery Objectives

Emergency Objectives implemented in response:

1. Protect Lives
2. Community Leadership and Reassurance
3. Lead Recovery - provide visible leadership of recovery in our own organisation and the Borough recognising Covid19 as part of the new normal
4. RBWM Business Continuity



Pandemic Impact on RBWM

Strategic Context

- Impact of Covid19 Pandemic:
 - Response requirements - PPE, testing, communications
 - Safety of staff and customers - service delivery impact
 - New service requirement e.g. contact tracing, shielding, Outbreak Management
 - Finances
 - Organisational capacity and focus
 - Revised transformation planning – seizing opportunities
 - Recovery planning
- Existing Strategic Framework is no longer relevant, political and leadership focus has shifted to new objectives



RBWM New Strategic Objectives 2020-21

- Covid19 Strategic Objectives
 - Covid19 Response (immediate)
 - Covid19 Recovery (long term)
 - Covid19 New Service Requirements
 - Interim Focus Objectives 2020-21
 - Service Stand Up Plans (business continuity)
 - Revised Service Operating Plans
 - Transformation Plan
 - Climate Strategy
 - Governance
 - People Plan – Values, Leadership, Black Lives Matter
 - Revised MTFS 2020-2024
 - Impact on medium and long term viability and specifically:
 - Reserves (s114 impact)
 - Income and Collection Fund
 - Service Costs
 - Covid19 Response Costs
 - Capital financing and pension contributions
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RBWM Covid19 Strategic Objectives

- Response requirements
 - Provide PPE via LRF
 - Coordinate testing and testing sites
 - School and Care Homes support
 - Communications
- Recovery Planning
- Safety of staff and customers
 - Covid safe spaces (Council sites)
 - Support, advise and regulate social distancing measures in other places – town centres, businesses, etc.
- New service requirement
 - Outbreak Planning Management
 - Shielding
 - Public Health data, coordination and control functions



RBWM Interim Focus Objectives

- Operating Plans
 - Service Stand Up Plans – ensure all service outcomes are being/are capable of being delivered
 - Revised Service Operating Plans – when services need to change to operate safely, viably, to meet new needs
- Strategy Action Plans
 - Transformation – deliver transformational outcomes for communities and the organisation, productivity and efficiency
 - Climate Change Strategy – initial objectives of strategy
 - Governance – response to recent reports
 - People Plan – embedding new values and behaviours, leading in a virtual world, embracing diversity in all ways
- Values
 - All of the above will be developed in line with our new values



RBWM Revised Service Operating Plans

- Office Accommodation (final proposal to be determined)
 - State and enforce minimums and maximums of attendance
 - Minimum 1 day per fortnight for a 'team touchdown'
 - Maximum number of days per week (to be calculated)
 - Consider exceptions where circumstances dictate – inappropriate home circumstances, DA
 - Work to make sure anyone not mobile at present can be mobile in the future (about 40 people)
 - Close down (with a view to moving out RBWM) St. Marys, Tinkers Lane, other office locations and use the Town Hall, Maidenhead as the key 'desk' location and York House as the 'team touchdown' location
 - Provide some hot desk provision for field workers in a operational buildings across the Borough



RBWM Revised Service Operating Plans

- Libraries
 - Reopen service by developing a digital click and collect or click and deliver system using some libraries
 - Building based service for book browsing to remain closed whilst alternative options are developed for safety of customers and staff
 - Mobile services to resume to support most vulnerable and hard to reach customers
 - Work to develop community focussed hubs with health and other colleagues where local services can be safely delivered (long lead in time for this for safety reasons)
 - Expanded digital offer developed during lockdown continue to be grown
- Customer Services Face to Face
 - No reopening of face to face drop in customer services
 - Use appointments for face to face meetings to protect staff and customers.
 - Focus on digital, telephone and appointments in that order
 - No customer service offer at libraries
- Museums and Tourist Information
 - Close museum as large number of staff and volunteers are shielding and any tourist market has disappeared
 - Potential to offer museum and custody of collection to another body
 - Close face to face tourist information and move entire set up to digital offer focussed on attracting people to the area overall



RBWM Revised Service Operating Plans Risks

- Office Accommodation
 - Equalities impact, need to make sure all circumstances considered
 - Management/leadership – risk of moving to a command and control culture
 - Organisational cohesion – potential for the organisation to separate as ‘human bond’ is weakened
- Libraries
 - Legal requirement to operate libraries
 - Impact on ancillary functions/outcomes libraries delivered previously will need to be resolved
- Customer Services Face to Face
 - Equalities impacts, need to ensure no one excluded, home visits?
 - Need to improve transactional value of web services – new website and CRM will come on stream in August 2020 - and telephone capacity
 - Document management/printing needs
- Museums and Tourist Information
 - Collection will still need to be maintained and managed



RBWM Revised MTFS Plan

Development Phase (June to August)

- Month 2 monitoring plus subsequent months
- Line by line review of service budgets
- Scenario planning by each service on cuts of 15,20, 25%
- Review of capital programme
- Review capital funding including CIL & S106
- Identification of cross cutting transformation benefits
- Identification of any additional resources required
- Review all inflation assumptions in the MTFS

Build Phase (September to October)

- Overall funding review
- Review all reserves and provisions
- Prioritisation and detailed work-up of initial service proposals
- Mid year review of Treasury Management
- Officer challenge on risks, issues, equalities and deliverability
- Completion of revised MTFS including reserve management strategy

Challenge Phase (November to January)

- Member challenge and scrutiny
- Completion of all capital, investment and treasury management strategies
- Draft budget completion
- Finalisation of tax bases

Formal budget setting February 2021

RBWM Interim Strategic Plan



Covid-19 Strategic Objectives

immediate response, long term recovery and new service requirements



Interim Focus Objectives 2020-2021

stand up plans, revised operating plans, transformation plan, climate strategy, governance, people plan



Revised Medium Term Financial Strategy

impact of Covid directly, economic downturn Government policy

Strong Foundations, Empowered to Improve, One Team and Vision, Respect and Openness

