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CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
C O U N C I L

Our Council Scrutiny Panel Meeting
Wednesday, 30 September 2020

Dear Councillor

OUR COUNCIL SCRUTINY PANEL - WEDNESDAY, 30TH SEPTEMBER, 2020

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at next Wednesday, 30th September, 2020 meeting of the Our Council Scrutiny Panel, the following report that was unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No   Item

7   **Our Council Scrutiny Panel - update presentation** (Pages 3 - 12)

          [This will be a joint presentation from SEB Leads to the panel]

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact the democratic support team:

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WOLVERHAMPTON
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Our Council
Scrutiny Panel

30 September 2020

Agenda Item No: 7

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Key Priorities for 'Our Council' Response

- Effective financial management and control
- Protecting and supporting our workforce
- Mobilising our workforce to provide effective services to our customers
- Responsive and effective Governance
  - Structuring ourselves to 'respond'
- Effective and safe asset management

Page 4

Our Money

Page 5

- Maintaining usual financial discipline – only spend where there is budget and authority
- All Government Grant allocations formally built into the budget
- Financial tracker managed centrally
- All key transactional functions have been maintained throughout
- Financial support to businesses and residents:
  - Over £28 million of new Business Rates Reliefs
  - Over 17,800 hardship payments totalling over £2.6million
  - Over £45 million in grants to businesses (small business, retail, hospitality and leisure)
  - £2.3 million in discretionary business grants

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Our Data

- Insight and performance lead assigned to every Covid-19 workstream

- Ensuring that evidence-based decision making at heart of the council response

- Technical team developing new dashboards to visualize data

- Insight team support robust analysis of key data sets

- Analysis of the evidence base critical to inform the recovery and reset work, which included analysis for the organisation (employees and services) and system (community and economy)

- All statutory returns completed on time over the Summer period

Page 6

Our Technology

- Supporting rapid mobilisation of agile working e.g. Microsoft Teams, devices etc

- Design and delivery of new developments to support Covid response e.g. Stay Safe Be Kind hotline

- Maintaining safety and security including achievement of Cyber Essentials Plus, implementing policy decisions such as the temporary block of Zoom

- Roll out of key infrastructure projects e.g. Local Full Fibre Network to roll out full fibre between public sector sites

- Delivery of ongoing ICT and digital improvements e.g. Eclipse go live

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Our Assets

- Working with services across the council to ensure council buildings are safe to access and use where absolutely necessary and to support the Council's wider Covid response (eg. Use of Aldersley as Food Distribution Hub).

- Health & Safety checks and clearances before buildings have re-opened to ensure safe working practices are in place. E.g. Legionella testing.

- Re-visiting cleaning specifications across buildings and working with clients to confirm new specifications concentrating on key touch points/ enhanced toilets cleans/ wiping down of desks with approved sanitiser and other areas with increased daily cleaning services in key areas.

- Supporting commercial tenants with "rent payment holidays" to assist with financial pressures owing to the lockdown (to be paid back via a 12-month repayment plan).

- Undertaking security and compliance checks for buildings (both open and closed) throughout lockdown.

Page 8

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Our People

- Continued reassurance from leader and chief executive on jobs, pay and safe working practices

- Regular and timely communication to Managers and employees (including schools) as advice and guidance changes

- Support for continued home working

- Focus on employee wellbeing (mentally, physically and financially)

- Clear recovery process for services reopening, including risk assessment guidance and appropriate consultation

- Redeployment system in place to support the response, recovery and for those unable to undertake their own duties

- Arrangements for local testing of employees

- Regular liaison and continued good working relationships with all of the relevant trade unions

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Governance

- All actions need authority – whether through existing delegations or formal decision – that discipline maintained.

- An urgent decision-making approach and process was introduced to provide authority beyond existing delegations

- Remote meetings introduced once the law had been changed in the Coronavirus Act with calendar of remote meetings

- Annual Council postponed, with postholders remaining in post until then.

- Record of all decisions kept showing strong audit trail for all actions and justifications for actions including evidence supporting decisions

- Risk register of Covid-19 produced alongside Strategic Risk Register

- Regular communications with Councillors – updates on the current position and any decisions taken

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Our Council and Recovery					
Our Money	**Our Data**	**Our Technology**	**Our Assets**	**Our People**	**Governance**
Building a revised MTFS to reflect the changing financial position Alignment of resources to Council priorities for recovery Sensitive engagement with residents and businesses	New data strategy, embed e vidence based decision making Improving open data Increasing data sharing	Ensure appropriate IT equipment, skills and support are available for all staff and Councillors	Ensuring safe operation of Council buildings being used during lockdown. Plan for the safe re-opening of Council buildings (timescales to be determined) in liaison with the wider Council and other stakeholders.	Ongoing support to Managers with the recovery, reopening and review of their services HR Business Improvement plan Launch HR Dashboard Rollout of Professional Conversation Protect and support our workforce	Effective risk management Effective decision making and recording Improved tracking and monitoring of decisions – 'loggist' Governance Improvement Plan Responsive legal advice and support responding to measures/ restrictions

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