

CABINET 20TH JULY 2020

Report title: Update on Covid19 impacts and activities (New Beginnings: Building Lambeth's Recovery)

Wards: All

Portfolio: Leader of the Council

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Report summary

The Covid19 virus has changed everything. Our borough has faced some extraordinary and far-reaching challenges. Lambeth residents have experienced great pain and hardship, isolation and declining health. Many people have lost their jobs. Large numbers of people have suffered ill-health as a result of the virus, with underlying health conditions often exacerbated by COVID-19. Consequently, and sadly, many people have died as a result of this pandemic.

It was said early on in the pandemic that coronavirus “does not discriminate”. The facts say otherwise. Vulnerable people, especially those from a Black and/or Minority Ethnic background, or older people or those living with disability, have been disproportionately hit hardest. Those who were celebrated weekly for their role as key workers have paid the ultimate price for their commitment to public service. Poorly paid public sector and health and care workers have borne the brunt.

While the Government has assisted many people, the national economy is projected to contract by up to a fifth in a single quarter. Millions of people have been furloughed. Thousands of jobs have been lost. Many businesses are under pressure. The aftermath of the initial crisis will be as every bit as challenging as the start of the pandemic.

And that pandemic is still ongoing, with a second wave now possible.

There have been changes to managing the spread of the virus - ‘clusters’ of Covid-19 outbreaks will now be managed locally, with potential localised lockdowns, as recently happened in Leicester. The Government now seems to accept that localised and neighbourhood solutions are far more effective than centralised ‘command and control’ approaches.

Yet as hard as dealing with the outbreak and the lockdown was, the challenges ahead are much greater. The slow lifting of lockdown and attempting to safely reopen our economy; adapting our daily lives to contain the spread of the virus; managing the enormous economic impact of covid-19 and the after-effects of lockdown on people’s mental and physical health – these are all interconnected and enormous challenges.

And this is because COVID-19 has not been simply a health crisis. It has been an economic, social and political crisis too. Unemployment and financial uncertainty, interruptions in education and life for young people, the challenge of sharing public space and a level of mental stress and anxiety which has been felt by everyone. Everyone in Lambeth has suffered through COVID-19.

Many of the negative impacts of the virus have exacerbated challenges of poverty and inequality already keenly felt by our communities and particular our Black and Minority Ethnic communities, older and disabled residents. And on those communities, the impact has been and remains compounded by the multiple ways in which those individuals and communities have been hit harder than others.

What the crisis has done – perhaps briefly - is to shine a light on these disparities and inequalities to a broader section of our population. It is crucial that in fighting for equality, those who do not personally experience these hardships understand and become allies. It cannot be right that we live in a borough celebrated for its diversity, yet that people's lives are so unequal and that so many of our residents are unaware of the situation their neighbours find themselves in.

The solutions require genuine engagement and partnership to set the right course for what will be a difficult future. Lambeth has always worked in partnership, recognising that doing things together gets to the heart of the problem and the right solutions better, but we must up our game and ensure that opportunities to be in control of one's future is our focus.

After a decade of austerity and year-on-year cuts, as a council we have sought as best we can to do what is needed during the pandemic. However, we know that the challenges of the future will need to be met within budgets that are under greater pressure than at any point since the London boroughs were created.

Our challenges relating to equality, education, employment, health and well-being as well as the climate emergency were significant before COVID-19. The pandemic has not only exacerbated these but has introduced new impacts and effects. We will only be able to tackle these by engaging in renewed collaborative working with residents, voluntary sector organisations, our business community and other partners.

We also know that economic recovery is critical to ensuring that we can deliver fundamental and lasting change in our neighbourhoods, improving the lives of our residents. We know that employment is not just important for the income that it provides. Meaningful well-paid work, with opportunity for progression and a liveable wage is also critical for good physical and mental health.

The challenges now faced by this generation are unprecedented and we will need everyone to pull together to ensure that our young people are supported to prosper and thrive. It requires us to build a dynamic, strong and equitable local economy, which creates and provides opportunities for local people to thrive, irrespective of their starting point.

Our approach has to be about ensuring that young people themselves have a stake in how their pathways are shaped and we must support parents and families collectively to raise our young people for success. We cannot see a return to our young people being put at risk of violence and they should all feel the freedom to move and grow in this borough.

Achieving such an objective means we must change too. We know that changing the way the council works is vital to delivering excellent public services. We want to bring the council's work to a more local, neighbourhood level, breaking down silos between different parts of the council and ensuring that solutions are rooted in the experiences of our diverse communities.

The council has committed to working with residents, institutions, businesses and voluntary organisation on building a recovery strategy for the borough. This will include: addressing health inequalities; supporting children and young people who have faced reduced access to educational opportunities and support; building a dynamic, strong and equitable local economy, which creates and provides opportunities for local people to thrive, irrespective of their starting point; maintaining the environmental gains of this period to deliver our climate change ambitions; and strengthening our communities through a new commitment to community groups and volunteering.

While we are committed to working with people to shape these approaches, we are also taking sustained and serious action to address the challenges our residents face now: including a youth jobs guarantee, a

new community-led approach to addressing serious violence in the borough and changing the way the council works in local neighbourhoods so we are more responsive to local need.

Of course, the health of the borough is not simply about how well the council is run and whether we can deliver what we need to. It is crucial that broader civic society is strengthened and supported, our community and voluntary sector, our faith community and the rich and varied ways in which people choose to connect and support each other. We have seen at large the capacity and willingness for Lambeth residents to help each other out. We will need more and a focus on supporting volunteering and sharing of the many resources and social capital inherent in this borough: whether that be mentoring, supporting vulnerable neighbours or in very simple ways being good citizens shopping in locally owned businesses and supporting the local economy.

Impact and Response

There have been (and remain) multiple ways in which individuals and communities have been hit hard. Our own research – and that of multiple external organisations - shows that some communities have been impacted more than others, and in more ways.

The challenges are huge. The solutions require genuine engagement and partnership to set the right course for what will be a difficult future. This report sets out how we might begin the conversations and dialogue needed with our residents, partners and others, enabling real change and a Lambeth recovery.

This report reflects on the known impacts of COVID-19 and sets out the early ideas around what we understand to be the significant changes in need across the borough and how we might need to change the way the Council works to meet them. It focuses on the services we can provide in a climate of unparalleled financial challenge. Coronavirus is not only a health crisis - it is also proving to be a profound crisis for jobs and our economy too and the council will have a key role to play in improving economic resilience and future growth.

The report refers to the long-standing partnerships and the new ones we have built over the last few months with other organisations across Lambeth and sets out how we might work at a local and a strategic level on the journey ahead.

Our challenges relating to equality, education, employment, health and well-being and climate change were significant before COVID-19. The pandemic has not only exacerbated these but has introduced new impacts and effects. We will only be able to tackle these by engaging in renewed collaboration and dialogue working with residents, voluntary sector organisations, our business community and other partners. This report sets out our initial views on how some of this might be achieved.

Finance summary

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

1. To note the report.

1. COVID-19: the story so far

- 1.1. COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the people who live, work and visit the borough. It hit quickly and had a crushing impact on many people in our communities. In early May, we published 'Lambeth United', a special [report](#) setting out our response to the crisis at the height of the pandemic which provided an early insight into how the Council, together with our partners and communities, came together to respond to the unprecedented challenge. This report to Cabinet is the foundation of what will be a follow-up to that report, as well as reporting on the work of the New Beginnings programme.
- 1.2. After months of lockdown, high levels of infections and deaths and huge societal change, we are now moving to a different phase in the management of COVID-19. While restrictions have eased, the scale of the challenge remains extraordinary.
- 1.3. Many issues that have been deep-rooted in our society for decades have become much more visible and painfully exposed over the last few months. Inequalities in health and economic welfare have surfaced and the pandemic has preyed upon many of these weaknesses with direct effect and tragedy. Throughout, it is acknowledged that there has been a disproportionate impact on BAME members of our community. Negative outcomes for many people have been exacerbated by COVID-19: these were highlighted by our own Equalities Commission in 2017 (<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/lambeth-equality-commission/lambeth-equality-commission>), remain very real and much now needs to be done to address them.
- 1.4. There are many personal stories of the impact and loss felt in the borough and COVID-19 has created new vulnerabilities, for people and place. It has disrupted everyday life. While we are now beginning a phased release from lockdown, we are moving into a new period which brings uncertainty for everyone. Despite the fact that the number of new daily cases in the borough have fallen dramatically, there is still fear and worry about the virus and how it may spread as restrictions ease.
- 1.5. The facts are stark:
 - There were 1,350 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lambeth, up to 7 July 2020 - these follow the national trends in terms of age, gender and socio-economic deprivation. It should be noted that this only captures people who have been tested. In the early stages of the pandemic, testing was focused on those admitted to hospital: as a result, the total number of cases is likely to be an under-estimate and will exclude "milder" cases.
 - In Lambeth, the overall cumulative infection rate, as of 6 July 2020, is 414 per 100,000. This is higher than the London-wide rate of 380, but lower than the rate of 439 for England.
 - National and local analysis has shown the unequal impact of COVID-19 on certain populations. This includes those from the most socio-economically deprived areas, older people, men, those from certain ethnic groups (particularly Black and Asian people) and those working in certain occupations.
- 1.6. There are many other factors that may be contributing to the unequal impact of COVID-19 on minority and vulnerable groups, including those highlighted in a recent [PHE report](#) such as:
 - Historic structural and systemic racism;
 - Poorer experiences of healthcare or at work;
 - Occupation;
 - Housing conditions;
 - Use of public transport;
 - Long term conditions/co-morbidities.

2. At time of crisis, Lambeth has come together

- 2.1. Working together with our partners in the voluntary and community sector (VCS), businesses and the emergency services, we reacted quickly. The council ensured that the most vulnerable residents had access to additional financial support, such as our extended financial resilience and welfare programmes to support people in a time of uncertain employment and financial stress. We have so far delivered over 10,000 food and aid parcels, and we will continue to deliver to those in need. As further help is clearly required, we are maintaining our dedicated helpline for people to get that support. To support businesses and organisations in need, we have set up an ambitious programme, which bolsters companies and charities and includes assistance for people applying for the government grants that were made available.
- 2.2. Like other local authorities and organisations, the council has also adapted our own way of operating dramatically, with staff working remotely. We have innovated: Lambeth was the first council to carry out its Annual General Meeting online, our new Mayor was conferred as First Citizen via videoconference. We have translated our communications and information on coronavirus into numerous languages, such as Amharic, Arabic, French, Spanish, Somali, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Farsi, Pashto, Urdu and even Tigrinya. We have built links with community groups who we erroneously classed as “hard to reach”: there is no such thing. There are communities with whom the council has struggled to communicate and engage with in the past, but that is not the fault of those residents. It is we who need to change our approach.
- 2.3. There is a sustained dual focus on keeping as many services running as possible, while dealing with the crisis. Service provision has almost always been strong: throughout the pandemic, including at its height, all council services were able to operate at levels ensuring residents’ needs were met. Every single one of our partners has also had to adapt to a new way of doing things, whether that be businesses, community organisations, places of worship, schools, education and youth organisations and of course individuals and families. Each has had a key role to play.

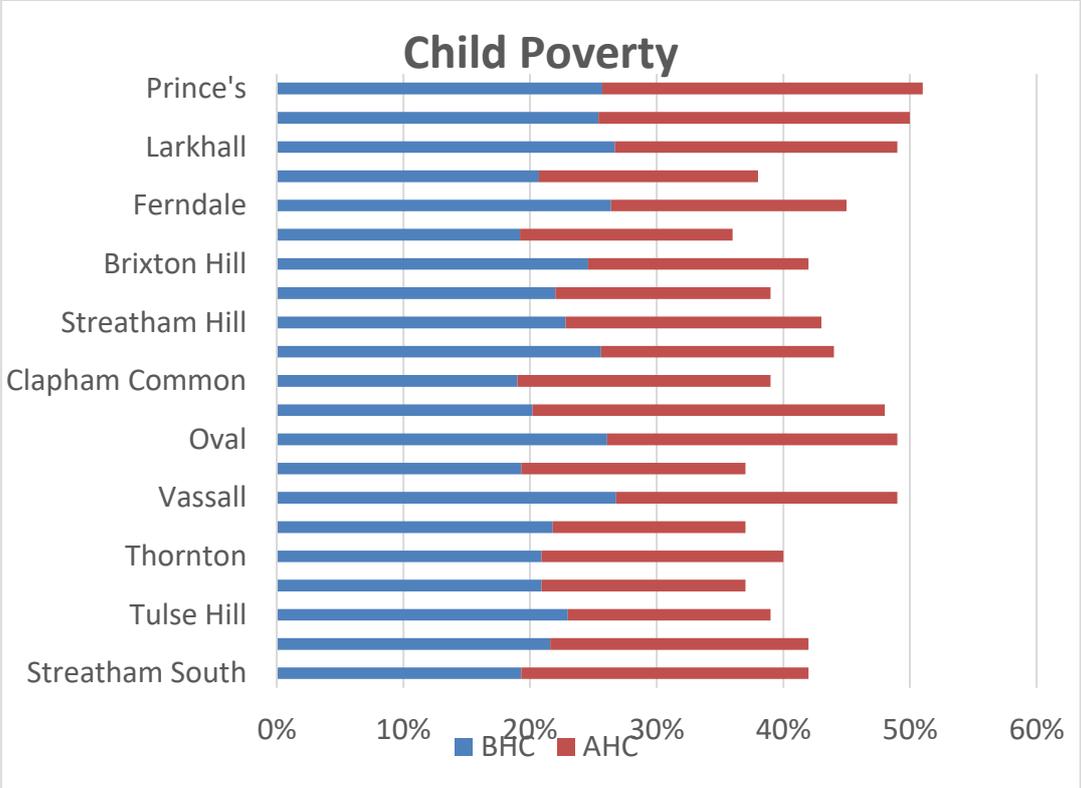
3. The scale of the challenge

- 3.1. Lambeth has a proud history. The borough is a place of ambition, innovation, culture and opportunity, a place of ‘radical hearts and open minds’. Yet, despite its many strengths, Lambeth has several significant challenges that pre-date COVID-19 and have now been exacerbated by the pandemic. As the 5th most densely populated borough nationally, social and economic problems are diverse and complex. Many residents live in overcrowded or poor-quality accommodation, with no access to private or shared green space apart from public spaces. Many of our residents work in sectors of the economy that have been most hit by the pandemic and the lockdown or have no sickness pay or are on unstable contracts. Facts like these contribute to Lambeth being the 8th most deprived of the 32 London boroughs.
- 3.2. Incredible diversity is a hallmark of Lambeth: according to the 2017 Equalities Commission report, 142 languages are spoken in the borough, reflecting a population that is majority non-white British. Black residents make up approximately 25% of the population, with 40% identifying as white British.
- 3.3. Approximately one in three children in Lambeth is born into poverty, higher than the national average of one in five. Some cohorts of pupils do not make as good progress as their peers (Black Caribbean pupils, Portuguese pupils, looked after children, disadvantaged and those with additional needs) and despite innovative and widely supported programmes to raise attainment

among our children, such as Raising the Game, performance of pupils at Key Stage 4 is 19% higher among children relative to those pupils in receipt of free school meals.

3.4 Even before COVID-19, about 43% of Lambeth children (estimated 25,000) live in poverty after housing costs (up to about half of children in the most deprived wards – see fig 1):

Figure 1: Child poverty in Lambeth



3.5 Just under 30% of Lambeth residents live in poverty after housing costs; worse than the London average of 27%. 36% of children in Lambeth were living in food poverty compared to 31% nationally. 22.3% of Lambeth children were eligible for and claiming Free School Meals – this places Lambeth in the highest quartile of local authorities in terms of needs and poverty.

3.6 We know that as a result of this already-challenging backdrop, COVID-19 will have hit our borough's children and poorer people particularly hard. The direct impact of the virus itself has been tragic, in terms of death and serious illness. Many people with chronic conditions, or those needing less urgent care have had their care interrupted. Critically, underlying health conditions are not evenly distributed across the population and are more common in deprived communities. As a result, people who live in more deprived areas, in more dense or overcrowded housing have higher diagnosis rates and death rates than those living in less deprived areas. At the same time as the direct impact of the virus, significant drops in A&E use, and falling admissions in areas such as maternity care, crisis mental health services, and access to emergency care for those who are considered frail, became a reality. The backlog of operations and care is significant. This could lead to real societal challenges and huge pressures on an already-overstretched NHS. For example, there has been a suspension of screening programmes for cancer and other conditions, leading to potential delay in diagnosis and treatment.

3.7 Since lockdown began, Lambeth has housed over 177 individuals in emergency hotel accommodation, some of whom would not usually be eligible for housing under the Housing Act. We are now working to provide support to move these individuals on to alternative accommodation, preventing a return to the streets. This has been referred to as 'In for Good'. Lambeth has signed up to the Rough Sleeping Next Steps Strategy, agreeing to work in partnership with London Councils, the GLA, Public Health England and the NHS to ensure that no-one who has been placed in emergency accommodation in

response to the Covid-19 public health crisis is asked to leave that emergency accommodation without an offer of support to end their rough sleeping. Lambeth has submitted an initial strategy for next steps to the MHCLG which outlines the need for revenue funding for support services and capital funding for repurposing existing buildings in to supported provision in our Vulnerable Adults' Pathway. The council is also working with London Councils to lobby the government to suspend the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition and provide appropriate funding to ensure that all those in need can be supported, regardless of their immigration status.

3.8 However, amid all the negatives, pain and sorrow, the pandemic has seen some more positive changes. For example, the lockdown forced real changes in behaviour which in turn resulted in quick (but potentially short term) climate emergency wins: there has been a marked reduction in traffic, a significant increase in cycling and walking and reduced emissions, especially in central London locations.

3.9 The task of this report is not only to set out the challenges, but also recognise the positives and establish ways to make sure that where things have changed for the better, we are able to keep the 'good' – and not return to 'how things used to be' and the 'old ways' of doing things, which did not work for so many people. Central to this is listening to and hearing the voices of our residents, VCS groups and business.

4. What you have told us

- 4.1. From the start of the pandemic, the council has been working to keep the public informed and safe. Although this remains our top priority, we are also determined that this crisis should be used to shape Lambeth for the better and take this once-in-a-generation opportunity to progress. We cannot revert to the way things were before the crisis.
- 4.2. We have been communicating throughout with our communities to understand how the pandemic has affected them and those they care about. At the same time, we proactively decided to commission research in which we asked residents, partners and others to give us their respective views on the future so that we can build a more sustainable, healthy, safe, vibrant and inclusive Lambeth for us all.
- 4.3. To carry this, the council commissioned DJS Research to carry out a special 'Pulse' survey to assess the impact of coronavirus. Using a sample size of 2000 Lambeth residents, the new data shows the extent of the challenge. This survey has been supplemented by new research of the effects of COVID-19 on our VCS sector, in which we worked closely with Integrate CIC. We also carried out research among our business community as well as a parallel survey of Lambeth children and young people.
- 4.4. The pandemic has clearly taken its toll. For residents, based on those that have responded, we now know that:
 - First, some positives. It is encouraging that self-reported health levels across the borough are predominantly good, with just under half of respondents saying their health was excellent or very good in the past week, and a further 34% saying it was good. Only 7% rate their health as being poor. However, thanks to COVID-19, 29% of respondents say they are less healthy than they were before lockdown. Those perceived levels of health deteriorate with increasing age according to our research, as well as among Black and other minority ethnic communities, especially among Asian residents.

- One third of residents now rate their anxiety 'negatively' - this rate has doubled since the 2020 Residents' Survey conducted in early January 2020 (pre-pandemic), a period of just two or three months.
- The wellbeing of children and/other family members, losing someone they love to the virus and residents' own mental health and wellbeing feature within the top three concerns of all ethnic groups (except Mixed ethnicity residents) but, not in the same order and with varying levels of agreement.
- More than a quarter of residents predict they will find it difficult to pay for their household essentials (e.g. food, electricity, gas and rent) over the next year, and this increases markedly among Black and all other non-white minority ethnic and vulnerable groups (34% compared to 15% White British), and further among Black residents (41%). There are some signs of increasing economic inequality with more BAME residents reporting reduced income in the household because of the COVID-19 lockdown.
- More than a third of those with a disability or long-term health condition have said they will have difficulty meeting their usual costs of living as a direct result of the pandemic.

4.5. This data clearly shows that while not everyone has suffered from COVID-19 directly, there are widely-held and deep concerns about the effect of it on people's general health and well-being, as they dwell on whether they will suffer from the virus ultimately or that a family member will do so. Anxiety, worries about money and how bills will be paid loom large for many residents of Lambeth.

4.6. Equally worrying, the findings of our parallel business survey show that the economy has greatly suffered. The range of organisations affected is wide: large cultural institutions, such as the National Theatre have been hit hard, but so have many small shops, traders, markets and other small outlets. Lambeth's diversity of businesses and commercial organisations is one of the borough's strengths. Sustaining their operations – and helping to retain jobs – was an early key priority for the council. Consequently, we announced one of the most ambitious packages of business support of any London borough, which included rent relief benefitting over 200 businesses in council premises; business rate relief, an emergency support scheme and the establishment of a Business Task Force, which quickly mobilised in partnership with our seven Business Improvement Districts.

4.7. Despite the levels of support, the business survey shows:

- Most businesses reported a negative impact and loss of income.
- Nearly a third of businesses reported that staff members were unable to work due to sickness, caring responsibilities, self-isolation, or other reasons.
- Nearly half of businesses surveyed reported that they had had to 'make any redundancies or stop deploying people on agency or zero-hour contracts or had furloughed all of their staff.
- The most significant impact was for freelancers or people classed as self-employed, with 20% of businesses reporting that they had stopped using them.
- Most businesses expected to access at least one of the government support measures which were announced by the Chancellor in the early stages of the pandemic.

- 39% of businesses have received support from their landlords. This figure differed significantly between businesses owned/led by a person/people from a BAME background and those that are not (37% compared to 62%)

4.8 The data from our survey of the Lambeth VCS also shows the harsh reality of the impact of COVID-19:

- 63% of organisations have had their operating status impacted by coronavirus pandemic (either they are operating 'additional hours', 'reduced hours' or 'closed').
- 75% of organisations say that they have seen a reduction in their income
- 57% of responding organisations have 3 months or less of reserves
- BAME-led organisations are most likely to report being closed, having a reduced income, having a budget deficit, having three months' or less reserves and are least likely to report being awarded additional funding when compared to non-BAME organisations.
- A significant number of organisations are reliant on the use of volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic - 35 organisations (30%) say that they have taken on 879 new volunteers, many of them through our volunteer scheme, 'Team Lambeth'.

5. Responding to immediate and longer-term challenges

5.1. The post-COVID-19 world will present many unprecedented challenges for Lambeth. There are five that need our urgent attention.

Health, Care and Wellbeing

5.2. At the end of June, the council published its Local Area Outbreak, Prevention and Control Plan <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/outbreak-prevention-and-control>. This provides a framework for preventing, preparing and responding to further localised outbreaks of the virus. It builds on what we have learnt in the initial response phase and uses local knowledge to apply it to the Lambeth context. It draws on the work of colleagues across London in Public Health England and other boroughs who have generously shared their local resources to enable us to collectively develop local plans to tackle this new threat.

5.3. There is the obvious need to address the impact of the illness itself and the pent-up demand for other treatments and conditions which have not been undertaken during the lock down period. There is a risk of broadening health inequalities and with a potential for a second wave being forecast the longer-term implications of the pandemic are unclear. We know that many people are feeling the effects of depression and worry about the future and what it will bring. We know there has been a disproportionate impact on the community resulting in widening health inequalities and we need to ensure that we seek to mitigate this wherever we can.

5.4. Healthcare needs have changed too, so we must find new ways of responding to this. Significant changes have been rapidly put in place to deliver services safely for residents and staff alike, to support the most vulnerable and to help stop the spread of infection. The pandemic has shown the importance of local connections and working with voluntary and community partners in ensuring the wellbeing of our residents. We were already working on plans to deliver healthcare and support at a much more local neighbourhood level. Lambeth Together partners are reviewing our plans through using our learning from COVID-19 to inform new approaches to integrated care, delivered within neighbourhoods and working across primary care, community services, social care and

voluntary sector partners. One centre piece of which is a district nurse system based around very small patches to connect support as close to home as possible.

- 5.5. There are many broad challenges we face, not least supporting the mental wellbeing of our whole community following the trauma of COVID-19. Previous challenges such as improving air quality and tackling obesity and diabetes have become even more crucial at a time when faced with an airborne virus which attacks people's respiratory systems.
- 5.6. The Lambeth health and care system has worked effectively and ever more closely together during the pandemic period. Our already strong collaborative arrangements, developed through Lambeth Together has enabled us to respond together, quickly and dynamically at this time of crisis. The emergency has meant that things have happened very quickly, with unexpected challenges faced and with an unprecedented requirement for agility and working in very different ways.
- 5.7. Working with partners across health and care we rapidly established leadership and oversight arrangements through the Lambeth Covid Borough Response Group (CBRG), meeting twice weekly and chaired by the Strategic Director for Integrated Health and Care. We made rapid and wide-ranging adjustments to services and support arrangements for service users and our communities. Through the use of dedicated programme support and shared leadership roles we effectively developed a well-coordinated borough response, fully engaged with wider SE London NHS and Lambeth Council emergency response arrangements. This has included areas such as discharge planning, demand and capacity, PPE provision, infection control advice, testing, support to care homes, delivery of medicines, food and essential advice to vulnerable individuals, mental health, children's and primary care.
- 5.8. The crisis has demonstrated that we are able to rapidly respond to emergencies but has also exacerbated issues around health and inequalities known to already exist within our borough. Through a range of workshops sessions, we have considered our lessons learnt and key themes to plan for planning for the potential for subsequent outbreaks of Covid-19, for recovery and key considerations for shaping the future of health and care services for Lambeth.
- 5.9. Lambeth Together partners have spent time during June and July considering learning from Covid-19 and together and have identified where there are clear priorities that can best be only be achieved by continuing to work collaboratively and with clear coordination across the Lambeth health and care system .
- 5.10. In addition, the way we will work, together and with our local people and in our local communities and neighbourhoods, becomes even more important if we are to achieve our ambitions. Through resident and patient surveys, engagement through the Health and Wellbeing Board and other fora we have sought to understand the experience of local people. The need to do more to address health inequalities, in particular experienced by our BAME citizens, and to support those most vulnerable in our borough is heightened.
- 5.11. A key reflection is that much of what we were doing through Lambeth Together before Covid-19 remains relevant, but the impact needed and the impetus for action is heightened. This has required us to review our existing plans and a renewed prioritisation approach.
- 5.12. We have considered our planning in terms of preparing for a future second wave or further waves of COVID-19 What we have learnt has determined how we can rapidly plan, act, contain and recover.
- 5.13. This Recovery Plan for health and care in Lambeth sits within the ambitions for recovery within the wider recovery plans within Lambeth and across the South East London Integrated Care System.

5.14. We have spent time considering the main themes that our recovery plan should cover, whilst also grouping the main actions in respect of those themes through our delivery alliances. It is through those arrangements that we will be able to achieve real change.

5.15. The strategy will focus on seven priority areas:

- **Staying healthy**
- **Sexual health**
- **The needs of children and young people**
- **The work and outcomes of the Neighbourhood and Wellbeing Delivery Alliance**
- **The work and outcomes of the Living Well Network Alliance to support adults with mental health needs**
- **People with complex needs, including continuing care and learning disabilities**
- **Support to the homeless and rough sleepers**

Children and Families

5.16 Complexity of need has increased. Reports from the Children's Social Care 'front door' has indicated an increase in the number of families experiencing a range of complex difficulties requiring support and intervention. These difficulties relate to several, often inter-related issues, including:

- Experiencing increased levels of poverty, unemployment and financial hardship.
- Increased pressure on the family unit, particularly for families experiencing related challenges prior to Covid-19 (impact of financial pressures, coupled with managing social isolation requirements, sometimes in poor housing).
- Coping with the challenge of providing home education and meeting the personal social, recreational and leisure needs of children and young people.
- Parental relationship problems.

5.17 Work is ongoing to fully understand the cause of these complexities, with focused attention being paid to attendant risks, including domestic violence and abuse and hidden harm.

In addition, some vulnerable children have not attended school during the lock-down period. Many families have had a positive experience of home-schooling, but some have found the experience of meeting their children's learning needs from home extremely difficult. These difficulties are likely to be compounded for our more vulnerable families, particularly those who do not have the necessary ICT to enable access to online learning. Gaps in learning will have emerged as a consequence, which in turn will have a bearing on progression.

5.18 Disproportionality is also an issue for children and families supported by Children's Services. The phased return of children to early learning settings and schools has seen a disproportionately lower number of children and young people from BAME communities returning to education. This presents the associated risk of a disproportionate impact on BAME children and young people with respect to gaps in learning.

During the lockdown, we have seen crime of all types apart from anti-social behaviour fall in the borough, particularly street based crimes such as robbery and violence. ASB has risen due to Covid related offences, and domestic violence has seen a much smaller fall than other crime types presumably because of the restrictions in movement increasing risk for victims. However, the rapid changes to drugs markets in particular has seen a substantial increase in risk for young people as

lockdown eases, as has the effect on lockdown conditions on high risk and vulnerable people. Our services for high risk gang offender and people at risk of radicalisation have had to change significantly, taking into account the greater pressures and less contact available. As lockdown eases, we are looking to build on this work to permanently embed these new ways of working into the service and how the council approaches crime and disorder.

- 5.19 In particular, one key area is the development of the new community forums, under the new Lambeth Made Community brand. These are building on the community engagement work we have done in the light of Covid-19, and the commitments we made in the Lambeth Made Safer outline that was reviewed by the Full Council in January 2020. These forums are a new way for Members, officers, partners and residents to communicate and work together to build longer-term resilience and look at how our borough wide, long term strategies can be translated and applied into a local ward area. They will focus on talking and addressing those issues which lower community resilience, allowing us to share intelligence with the public and police partners in a better and more meaningful way. This approach will enable the council and partners to develop a true community led response to these issues.

The new forums will complement the existing Safer Neighbourhood Team approach by focussing on root causes and long-term community resilience and reaching out to communities we have failed to sufficiently hear and engage with in the past.

The Lambeth Made Safer strategy for reducing violence against young people will be the initial starting point for these forums, but they will also include our work on violence against women and girls (VAWG), modern slavery, radicalisation and any other resilience issue where our community has concerns and we can work together to tackle them. They will be a multi-channel approach (online and in person where allowing), to create as great an engagement and participation push as possible.

- 5.20 Given the impact of COVID-19, there has been a need to find and introduce alternative ways of providing education, social care, health and community safety services. This challenge has been amplified by the need to maintain support for families, and in many cases the agencies working with them, through the deployment of a workforce that has, for the most part had to working remotely.

Alternative arrangements have been rapidly determined and introduced. The provision of 'virtual' support has in many instances proved successful but also has its limitations, particularly when needing to provide support to vulnerable children and families, young people known to the Youth Offending Service, for example.

- 5.21 Barriers to face-to-face contact with vulnerable children have also had an impact on safeguarding, presenting challenges to Children's Social Care in particular. Services are aware of and attending to the associated risk of hidden harm.

In response to these issues, a Children's Services Resilience Plan has been developed and implemented. It has been constructed to address the breath of need arising as a consequence of COVID-19. It includes a 'Schools and Settings' component to address all education related needs and issues and encompasses other areas ranging from Children's Social Care's 'Response and Support' work to 'Young People in the Community' related activity. Activities expedited via the plan include:

- the establishing of a Critical Safeguarding Team and Panel to ensure the needs of our most vulnerable children and families are met;
- the creation of a digital youth offer, a detached youth work project and associated young people's crime prevention plan;
- the issuing of ICT equipment to vulnerable children and young people; and
- the implementation of the Schools Recovery Plan.

The plan will continue to be implemented and modified as required. Furthermore, associated work including the development of a Youth Strategy will be progressed with youth engagement activity

to further develop our understanding of young people's needs and issues undertaken over the summer.

5.22 Wider learning arising through the delivery of the Resilience Plan and the introduction of new ways of working in response to Covid-19, has enabled the following opportunities to be identified for further consideration as part of the wider New Beginnings initiative:

- The opportunity to develop a mixed economy of virtual and actual contact with families whose response needs may vary from 'light touch' to 'intensive'. Learning over the past 3 months indicates that residents can experience a greater breadth of support though considered differentiation of intervention type, based on clear assessment of need and risk.
- The opportunity to work in a more agile way across divisions of service and partnerships in order to provide a swifter and more collaborative response to residents need.
- The opportunity to adopt a more flexible and creative ways of deploying the Children's Service workforce to meet a broad range of inter-related need.

5.23 As part of recovery and improvement plans in this area we are investigating:

- Applying to be part of the UNICEF Child Friendly Communities scheme which puts the voice and rights of children at the heart of services.
- Using Lambeth Together Children's Alliance to support better mental health of children and young people
- Building on last November's Lambeth Health and Poverty Summit by developing a Child Poverty Reduction Strategy to address the key driver of poor health, educational and other outcomes, namely poverty

Employment and Economy

5.24 As our COVID-19 business survey data shows (section 4.8), the local economy has been hit hard by the pandemic. Nationwide, huge job losses are occurring at an accelerating rate as furloughing schemes approach their end and a lack of income for many months leaves business unable to afford salaries. Substantial business failures are forecast. The Chancellor announced on 8th July that the UK economy contracted by 25% in just the two months to April, the same amount that it grew by in the previous 18 years.

5.25 We now have over 2.5 times the number of Universal Credit claimants than we did before the pandemic. As the Government's job retention scheme ends in the autumn, unemployment is expected to rise in Lambeth to around 30,000 residents, which is significantly higher than ever recorded previously.

5.26 Hotels, restaurants, the night-time economy, retail and the cultural sectors will all potentially be impacted and some may never recover to previous levels of activity. In April 2020, monthly growth in the arts and culture sector fell dramatically, almost halving previous levels. Organisations like the National Theatre announced 400 job losses earlier this month and we know that many more will follow in the supply chain to these industries, despite the announcement of £1.57 billion worth of emergency support for the country's cultural industries and arts.

5.27 Optimistically it is thought that other sectors may see some short-term growth. Businesses operating in fields such as health and social care, distribution and jobs in sectors associated with the green economy may well survive and some even prosper. Helping support growth will be critical – so, for example, a focus on apprenticeships within the council and especially among our health partners, will be part of the solution. We want to create opportunities for care leavers and vulnerable people where we can recruit and train local people and potentially transfer our apprenticeship levy to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) helping them sustain growth and jobs.

- 5.28 In the short term we will be publishing a Recovery Strategy which is based on three phases. The first focuses on stabilising the local economy, including – in blunt terms – business survival through the short term, working with local organisations including the Business Improvement Districts and the South Bank Employers Group. The second phase, launched in early July, centred on the need to support safe business operations and high streets re-opening. We have done this by published refreshed and accessible information on licensing and planning and by proactively and regularly engaging with businesses to discuss their needs. The third phase will look to help businesses reinvent themselves, capturing new behaviours and opportunities to re-build a greener, more resilient and equitable economy.
- 5.29 For many, the economic picture is nothing less than bleak. However, younger people are especially affected by economic collapse. To maximise the chances of them finding work, the council is launching a Lambeth Youth Guarantee, which will promise every young person aged 16-24 access to education, training, jobs and apprenticeships. We will help individuals who face barriers to employment with intensive support and we will provide out-reach activities on our housing estates and with other public services, bringing the opportunities and training to people to expand our 'front door'.
- 5.30 Our Adult Learning service will continue to improve skills and we will be bidding for funding from the GLA's Covid-19 Response Fund to support workers who have been furloughed or made redundant, or whose jobs have changed; or learners who are at risk of digital inclusion.

Climate emergency

- 5.31 During the period of lockdown, the closure of much industry and many workplaces, the restrictions on travel and the disruption of consumption patterns is cumulatively estimated to have reduced global carbon emissions for this year somewhere between 4 and 10%. The pandemic has exposed residents to different ways of working, travelling and shopping; it has demonstrated the importance of social networks in making communities resilient and providing protection to those who become vulnerable; and it has reaffirmed the importance of our local green spaces.
- 5.32 Some of the changes in behaviour we have seen during the pandemic have environmental benefits, and if they can be maintained, will be an important part of our climate change response. This includes large decreases in the number of motor vehicles on our roads and with it, improvements in air quality. Across London it is estimated that levels of nitrogen dioxide NO₂ fell by 27% in the period from mid-March when the lockdown was imposed, to mid-April.
- 5.33 As use of public transport reduced, and roads became less busy, we believe Lambeth has also seen an increase in walking and cycling. Although many people across London will not be commuting to work, there have been increases in weekend cycling figures, suggesting more people have felt confident using roads.
- 5.34 The Council had already declared a climate change emergency. Climate advocacy groups around the world are now calling for governments to use this period as an opportunity to reset; to make changes that mean we do not return to such unsustainable ways of living.
- 5.35 This will mean making rapid interventions to embed behaviour change and also prioritising government investment for economic recovery in those initiatives that will help us transition to a lower carbon economy. This approach is rapidly gaining traction, and is reflected in emerging recovery strategy for London, and Lambeth.
- 5.36 We have continued to invest in cycleways, safely, during lockdown, most notably with the completion of our Baylis Road Cycle path in Waterloo. We are implementing our interim measures for social distancing on our highways and pavements and in our parks. We were successfully awarded just under £2m of grant from the Department of Transport to deliver this.

Our proposed investment in our capital programme will help drive this agenda into the future and complement the economic recovery programme.

- 5.37 We will be hosting a climate change assembly, where we will be seeking the input of residents who reflect the borough, businesses and technical advisors to build our strategy to reduce travel and reduce our gas emissions in our buildings. We already have ambitions to increase recycling across the borough for everyone.

6 Strengthening our communities

- 6.1 The last few months have emphasised the huge well of community support, resilience and resource among our local communities, but we know there is much we need to do to help our communities recover. Key to that effort will be the strength of our VCS: we celebrate their dedication and passion, as well as the sector's strength, but we recognise that the need for support and co-ordination with and among them is even greater. We intend to give the sector the support it needs to improve both capacity and capability, but first we must engage better and improve the way the council supports and partners with the sector. Shared endeavour is a key principle behind our existing Borough Plan – the work of the council and the VCS over the last few months has showcased that strongly.
- 6.2 The response of residents, forming as Mutual Assistance Groups (MAGs), has been inspiring. The MAGs have spontaneously and powerfully helped neighbours in need and demonstrated the real value of local action, community connections and people power. The council has been proud to work alongside them.
- 6.3 That incredible response was further demonstrated by the creation of 'Team Lambeth', a volunteering brokerage, screening and matching service which was created from scratch and now involves over 1500 Lambeth residents giving of their time and skills freely to support others. The challenge now will be to maintain that effort. As part of the New Beginnings process, officers and Members are now working together to develop a volunteering offer that will work within the council, for the community – strengthening the strategic relationship of the council with our VCS and harnessing the huge social capital Lambeth enjoys.
- 6.4 As we develop a new volunteering strategy, we will talk to our VCS partners, with Mutual Assistance Groups and with our 'Team Lambeth' recruits about what shape the strategy should take and how it should be resourced and managed. The council is clear that a dedicated function should exist in the council, working closely with partners, to sustain and build the enormous community spirit which has been unleashed by COVID-19.

That engagement is critical – we need to listen to those who have taken the time to volunteer in their local community. They are the experts.



Case Study



This is Ro.

Ro has lived in Lambeth for four years, with her partner.

Ro became the 1,500th Lambeth resident to volunteer for Team Lambeth and wants to put her skills into practice to help the community: *“I enjoy outdoors activities, but also organising, coaching, etc. I also speak Spanish, so helping the Latino community would be amazing.*

“I’ve lived in Lambeth since 2016. I live with my partner, we’ve no children. We found a new flat that we love in Clapham, and rent is a bit more affordable than London Bridge where we lived before. The convenience of living so close to the Underground, I think that’s our favourite thing. We also love being close to Clapham Common and the restaurants in Clapham Old Town.

“I’m self-employed. and work as an IT Project Delivery Manager. My contract with my client terminated due to Covid, so now I have time to give back to my community. My mantra has always been ‘hoy por ti, mañana por mi’ (today for you, tomorrow for me). I enjoy helping others, from cleaning churches’ gardens, teaching basic computer classes to adults, or helping at the reception desk or admin tasks needed by small charity organisations. Four years ago, I helped a small charity with the delivery of a social programme to promote awareness and education of cyberbullying.

“When you’re volunteering, the success of achieving the goal of the charity or the fundraiser is a good measure, but when people residents are the recipients, seeing them happy or thankful of receiving help, that’s when you know your volunteer efforts have paid off.”

- 6.5 The work of our faith groups through the pandemic has been exemplary. As the Government locked down the economy and public spaces, places of worship were closed. The council has been proud to work with organisations such as Faiths Together in Lambeth, with our local mosques and churches and other religious places to help disseminate key information about the pandemic. Religious leaders and faith groups have been a key conduit for the council to help provide advice, reassurance and help. In the future, as part of our review into how we better support the VCS, we will ensure that support for faith groups is a key component of our structures. Working with ward councillors and community leaders, we will grow our partnerships with faith groups, helping them build capacity and firmly acknowledging their roles as routes through to some of the most vulnerable and isolated, for whom faith is central to their lives.

7 Digital connectivity and digital divide

- 7.1 The way the council worked – and continues to work - during the COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that digital innovation is essential if we are to continue to meet our residents' needs. Without digital information, the internet, social media and videoconferencing, the horrors of the pandemic would have been multiplied many times over. There would be less critical information; less instant updates on key events and announcements; less sharing of infection control information in languages other than English; people who are isolated and alone would not benefit from the opportunity to speak to family and friends far away and employers and employees would not be able to work from home or elsewhere.

While the digital era has brought benefits, which have been magnified by the pandemic, it has also exposed the digital divide. According to Good Things Foundation, 11.3 million people in the UK today lack the skills and experience needed to access the web and all of its content, and use it to pay bills, to home-school children, to learn, to play and to work.

- 7.2 In Lambeth, we must prioritise bridging the digital divide. The council believes that we have a key leadership role to play in enabling low-income families access digital devices and affordable and reliable wifi connections. Throughout the pandemic, we worked with schools, VCS groups and corporate donors to identify, re-purpose and distribute digital kit to residents who needed them.

That work will now intensify as the digital future expands. COVID-19 has acted as a further catalyst: many millions of people have relied – and increasingly relied – on digital devices and the web. Lambeth is fortunate to have some major corporates located in the borough, such as IBM. Apple will be part of the Vauxhall Nine Elms community very soon. The council has already begun dialogue with corporate partners and with the VCS to connect people with digital kit.

- 7.3 In the early autumn we will bringing forward our digital strategy which will be anchored around 5 themes:
- Delivery of infrastructure to ensure our residents and businesses have access to full fibre and high-speed broadband
 - Ensure every resident has the opportunity to access technology and the internet and the learning to be able to participate in the digital economy
 - Enable businesses to thrive and grow, increasing their competitiveness and skilling their workforce to support innovation
 - Facilitating the ability for our communities to transact with the council in a secure, easy and convenient way that meets their needs and saves them time – including the roll-out of a new website which has been reviewed by dozens of Lambeth's diverse residents: their voice and views will shape our new platform.

8 Looking to the future

- 8.1 Planning for the future is difficult: the pandemic is far from over and still presents real threats. Many of the issues are inextricably linked and complex, but we do need to find a way to start to understand and respond to them. This is being informed by looking at our own working practices, reflecting on our service delivery during these difficult times and having conversations with our partner organisations about the way they have coped during the last few months and their expectations for the future.

- 8.2 We are reviewing the way we can deliver our services to best meet needs in the future. Some of those needs are yet to be defined and that is why dialogue is important. In addition, we have also looked at how the council can introduce new ways of working to be more efficient/effective and how can we work collaboratively with partners across the borough, and indeed outside the borough, for example with neighbouring authorities.
- 8.3 Many of our staff have been working remotely and while some are ready to return to the Civic Centre, others have found that different methods of working provide them with savings in time and expenses. Our customers have reflected the same in that activities that used to be done face to face are now being completed online or by telephone. We have successfully run Full Council and committee meetings virtually, including Cabinet and Planning Committee and continued to engage our residents on a range of issues. These are things that we wish to continue, wherever we can.
- 8.4 We have started to explore changing the way we work using technology and digital platforms to give us more knowledge and enable us to respond more efficiently to the needs of our communities. We are aware that some residents do not have access to technology or high broad band speed. We will be introducing programmes to address these over the coming year.
- 8.5 We know that the needs of residents have and will continue to change. We intend to focus on listening and dialogue, so that we can better support people to tackle the real issues affecting them. We want to encourage this through our existing engagement with residents and groups but also to look at new ways of capturing information and ideas. As has happened so far, the response to the pandemic has come from many sources and will continue to do so but it is crucial we focus on what works and what is needed rather than be limited solely by what the Council is mandated to provide.
- 8.6 We know partnership is essential to at a local, a borough and with wider partners, (including working with other councils and the Mayor of London). This will require joined up thinking at a strategic level within organisations like the health service and employment agencies such as the DWP but also with our private sector investors who are driving growth and development. Different sectors will require different approaches. The application of digital interventions has never been more critical and we are pleased to have been on the front foot with this thinking when we adopted the digital and creative strategy in 2018. More investment is planned in this area as we see remote working and accessibility to technology as being critical to economic sustainability and educational needs.
- 8.7 Strategic investment and using our capital money wisely will be a top priority as we move into the next phases of the crisis. The council recognises its role in providing leadership for all of this work. We are able to prioritise our own strategic investment, and shape that of others by working creatively and with agility. Our position is unique in being able to make direct investment and shape that of others, to especially seek to address the inequalities that were visible pre COVID-19 and are very evident today.
- 8.8 In parallel, alongside the strategic, the local matters too. Our neighbourhood working project, which was underway just as the pandemic hit, is now given fresh impetus by the clear evidence of how local people can make a real difference in their own localities. Public sector agencies, local community and voluntary sector groups and residents are experts in what happens in their neighbourhoods and how solutions can be best developed and applied. A focus on neighbourhood working will require significant culture change within all organisations. Being able to act quickly and decisively to resolve a crisis demands agile working and partnerships. It is often complex and difficult - but the pandemic has shown us that it is more than possible.

8.9 While the pandemic has already seen huge community efforts to support each, we are now in a new phase which will require another huge mobilisation of effort. We need to support and help people to return to some level of normality while seizing the opportunities that have been created to change the way we do things. We intend to seize this moment as we explore ways to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities both now and into the future, whether this is by supporting the economy or improving the environment. Our investment decisions in new homes and jobs and new infrastructure will we hope, support others to do the same to address the inequalities in our society and create a sustainable future.

9 CONCLUSION and NEXT STEPS

9 Financial impact: the cost of the pandemic to date

9.1 In addition to the impact on individuals, the Council has been providing additional support to communities and business. This has placed additional pressures on Council finances, with unprecedented levels of additional unplanned COVID-19 related cost pressures and lost income for authorities.

9.2 We've spent millions on supporting care homes, providing PPE, giving out millions to keep businesses going, making emergency transport changes to aid social distancing and delivering over 20,000 food packages. But that extra spending, combined with a huge fall in income from parking, business rates and council tax, means we face a huge budget shortfall.

9.3 The government at the start of the pandemic said that councils would be fully funded and that we should spend whatever it takes. But so far, government funding covers less than half of the financial impact (£19 million of a £47 million budget shortfall). Even our most cautious estimates are that Lambeth council could face a funding crisis of £17 million – and it could be as high as £50 million as the country faces a recession and huge uncertainty. That's more than we spend on rubbish collection, parks, libraries, leisure centres, roads, children's centres and public health all together.

9.4 The council is making representations to central government about the need to ensure local councils are fully supported for the costs of dealing with the pandemic, particularly as it comes after a decade of central government funding reductions with councils already facing financial shortfalls. The Financial Planning and Medium Term Strategy Report 2020/21 to 2024/25 sets out more details about the council's financial challenge.

9.5 At the same time, the council is setting out plans to support a recovery that works for everyone, through an ambitious agenda of investment in jobs, homes, public infrastructure and tackling climate change. Our Capital Investment Programme will see over £370 million invested over the next 5 years in the borough in schools, hospitals, libraries, parks, transport infrastructure and community facilities. It will support ambitious economic plans for affordable workspace, good jobs and culture and leisure facilities in every part of the borough and will see record investment in making our area greener and in digital infrastructure to address the gap in digital connectivity that we've seen over the next few months. We're able to invest this money because of prudent use of the council's resources and assets and good financial management over the last few years despite government cuts. But that investment, and our ability to support our residents as we have over the last few months, could be put at risk if the government doesn't keep its promises to fund local authorities for the work we've done to fight Covid-19.

FINANCE

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

LEGAL AND DEMOCRACY

There are no legal comments arising. Specific legal advice will be provided as required.

CONSULTATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

As the findings of new beginnings are implemented the Council will engage with a range of stakeholders. A resident's pulse survey has been undertaken, the findings of which will be reported separately. The findings will be used to inform the new beginnings programme.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Not applicable at the current time, although comments under 2.8 of this report highlight the risk of the cost of the emergency measures to date. A risk analysis will be completed as the work progresses.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The impacts on equalities form part of the main body of this report. The findings will be used to inform the new beginnings programme.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Not applicable at the current time. The impacts on community safety will be monitored and updated as and when required.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental

Not applicable at the current time. The environmental impacts will be monitored and updated as and when required.

Health

The impacts on health form part of the main body of this report.

AUDIT TRAIL**Consultation**

Name and Position/Title	Lambeth Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in paragraph:
Councillor Jack Hopkins	Leader	06.07.20	08.07.20	Throughout
Andrew Travers	Chief Executive	06.07.20	08.07.20	
Christina Thompson, Finance	Finance and Property	10/07/20	10/07/20	
Alison Mckane, Legal Services	Legal and Governance	10/07/20	10/07/20	
Wayne Chandai Democratic Services	Legal and Governance	10/07/20	10/07/20	

REPORT HISTORY

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Part II Exempt from Disclosure/confidential accompanying report?	No
Key decision report	No
Date first appeared on forward plan	Non key
Key decision reasons	Non key
Background information	N/A
Appendices	N/A

