

Title of Report:	Leisure and Development Recovery and Outline Business Plans for 20/21
Committee Report Submitted To:	Leisure and Development Committee
Date of Meeting:	18th August 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Decision

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and Engaged Communities.
Outcome	Council will work to support healthy lifestyle choices for all citizens.
Lead Officer	Director of Leisure and Development.

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	£10,332,289
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	Various
Staffing Costs	Inclusive

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to present an Outline Business Plan for the service areas within the Leisure and Development Directorate, for the remainder of the 2020/21 Financial Period, following the Covid 19 Pandemic.

2.0 The Lockdown Period

Working principles and activities from March to July 2020 – See Annex A.

3.0 The Recovery Period

As Council enters in the Recovery Period, the Fundamental Principles regarding the continuation of existing services, opening of facilities and the initiation of projects / programmes / events is the prioritisation of key services within the context of the affordability of the 20/21 Revenue Budget.

4.0 Income Loss

As a direct consequence of the UK Government Guidance, applied by the NI Executive in order to inhibit the transfer of Covid 19, the Leisure and Development income generating services and programmes have been curtailed since the later weeks of March 2020. During the period of complete lockdown, a general estimate is that L&D is losing £500k income each month.

5.0 Cost Mitigation

Savings to offset the lost income will be derived from:

- Furloughed Permanent Staff.
- Furloughed Agency Staff undertaken by Grafton Recruitment.
- Utilities costs reduced as a consequence of closing facilities (albeit essential maintenance continues).
- Minimal additional staff costs resulting from mileage, expenses and overtime.
- Programmes and activities.
- Supplies and services.
- Events (March to September).
- NI Executive Covid 19 Support from DfC / DAERA /SEFA.

6.0 The Financial Approach During Covid 19 Recovery

The Council agreed net budget position for each directorate and service area remains as the 20/21 annual target budgetary position.

Service Area	19/20		20/21	Tier 4	20/21
	Budget	Actual	Budget		Budget
Community & Culture	1,730,037	1,494,892	1,684,876	Community Development	357,568
				Cultural Services	1,100,028
				Good Relations	65,500
				PEACE IV	0
				PCSP	84,130
				C&C Management	77,650
Prosperity & Place	1,620,587	1,323,939	1,476,896	Economic Development	1,051,850
				RDP	0
				Regeneration	5,000
				Town & Village Management	191,697
				Strategic Projects	130,000
				P&P Management	98,349
Sport & Wellbeing	4,589,206	5,313,620	4,740,953	Area Mgt Central	745,184
				Area Mgt East	756,422
				Area Mgt West	679,596
				Facilities East	911,265
				Facilities West	720,164
				Sports Development	477,524
Tourism & Recreation	1,824,073	1,253,737	1,652,720	Coast and Countryside	655,775
				Destination Management	934,312
				Events	1,016,600
				Holiday & Leisure Parks	-1,033,754
T&R Management	79,786				
Leisure Management	492,955	487,220	500,468		500,468
Funding Unit	203,358	171,883	209,595		209,595
SIB	106,880	87,083	66,781		66,781
TOTAL	10,567,096	10,132,374	10,332,289		10,332,289

Furthermore budget management is allowing the corporate body to rebuild General Reserves, therefore stringent financial analysis and cost control are an absolute necessity.

7.0 The Approach

Financial Analysis and Planning. Accurately understand the net budgetary shortfall by Directorate, Head of Service Area, Tier 4 Service Area and Programme, Project and Activity.

- Monthly income shortfall through management account analysis.
- Proactive cost mitigation planning and controls.

Whilst the net budget position for the directorate remains as the 20/21 annual target budgetary position, service area prioritisation will necessitate budget transfers within the directorate.

The Reinstatement of Services. Council has now agreed the opening of facilities, from which modified services will be delivered.

Service Prioritisation. The reinstatement of services, activities and programmes is based upon prioritised recovery themes:

- The economic recovery of the Borough.
 - Phase 1. 18 to 36 month recovery and renewal.
 - Phase 2. Investment & Regeneration to create resilience and growth.
- The Social welfare of the citizens of the Borough.
 - Community Development initiatives, especially in areas of social deprivation.
 - Community support activities, utilising central government statutory programmes and funding.
- The health and wellbeing of the citizens of the Borough.
 - The continuation of the 'In-House Transformation' Process of Council's Major, Minor Leisure Facilities and Sports Development Unit.
 - Activities which contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of the citizens of the Borough. A focus should be on 'high risk' individuals / communities. Minimal additional costs should be incurred. Partnership projects are to be prioritised.
 - Maximise the benefits of the Borough's outdoor environment.
- Recovery Planning. The financial and practical planning necessary to allow for the considered reinstate of facilities and activities based upon affordability and the functions to allow safe public use.

Based upon the above prioritisation, the necessary expenditure reduction will be applied as a directorate and not arbitrarily for each service area.

8.0 CAPEX

Consider the affordability of CAPEX within the context of Council's limits on capital expenditure and the prioritisation of Capital Projects.

9.0 The Opportunity

The Recovery Period must establish a 'new normal', allowing the cultural challenges of the past to be reset. Positive change through innovation, technology, leadership and staff engagement / ownership presents a real opportunity for service improvement and efficiency.

10.0 Service Area Recovery and Outline Business Plans

Prosperity and Place.

Statement of Purpose	The creation of a high value added, skilled, innovative and enterprising economy, coupled with the regeneration of the physical environment (urban, rural and resort) to create a better place.
Prioritised Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provision of Business Support for Covid 19 Specific Government Funding / Grant Schemes (mostly now completed). 2. Business Support for Covid 19 Specific Consequences i.e. the practical measure for recovery - funding for and continuation of recovery / renewal programmes (Alchemy, Enterprise Fund – Go-For-It, Digital Causeway, Taste Causeway etc). 3. Business Support for existing Council and Government Funding / Grant Schemes (DAERA Small Grants Programme). 4. Working in partnership with Department for Communities on town centre recovery actions. 5. Provision of funding from existing budget for employment specific advice services. 6. Partnership working with key Stakeholders (EAG, Solace, INI etc). 7. Workforce Development Group. 8. E Commerce SME Trading Platform. 9. Economic Development Strategy / Growth Strategy – aimed at combining both initial recovery, and then moving into renewal and regeneration where relevant. 10. Growth Deal – Next Steps. 11. Dunluce Centre – Development Brief Next Steps. 12. Develop an understanding of the Circular Economy and the benefits to consumers, business and the environment. 13. RDP Village Renewal. <p><u>Phase 2. Investment & Regeneration to create resilience and growth.</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Implementation of the revised Economic Development Strategy / Growth Strategy. 15. Full Fibre Northern Ireland Implementation with a view to further investment in light of Covid 19 remote working challenges.

	<p>16. Growth Deal Project Progression – depending on forthcoming projects:</p> <p>17. Partnership with DfC Regeneration Activities.</p>
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Sport and Wellbeing.

Statement of Purpose	The provision of high quality leisure and sport services, accessible to all via need based programmes and sustainable facility provision, enhanced by effective partnership working to create increased levels of participation in physical activity, improved health and wellbeing and an enhanced quality of life.
Prioritised Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phased Reopening of Facilities. <i>Research / guidance to balance against financial reality.</i> 2. The reintroduction of health and wellbeing activities / programmes. <i>As above.</i> 3. The management and maintenance of facilities in the Covid 19 'environment' (open and closed). Based on C-19 guidelines at the time of potential re-opening and affordability. 4. IHT Evaluation. Progress against Mobilisation Plan and revision of Shadow Bid required to adopt for Covid-19 operating environment. 5. S&W T&Cs. Re-engagement with TUs in order to progress in advance of re-opening and future recruitment from Agency / completion of final structure. 6. Capital Projects: subject to decision regarding capital programme affordability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Campus Ballycastle: <i>Stage 3 / Planning Application submitted, keeping SEUPB updated.</i> • Review the Ballycastle Marine Hotel Option: <i>Need an update from Angela Reavey.</i> • Portrush Recreation Grounds: Aiming to get project to Stage 3 / Planning Application for Investment Decision Jan/Feb 2021 (both CCAG and DfC). • Diversity playpark project Limavady. <i>OBC 75% complete pending input from CDT on Roe Mill Playing Fields.</i> • Burnfoot Pitch / Changing facilities: <i>OBC 90% complete pending review/discussion.</i> • Playpark Aghadowey: <i>OBC 75% complete pending input from CDT.</i> • Cloughmills Pitch / Trg: <i>OBC 90% complete pending review/discussion.</i> • Riada Changing. <i>OBC 90% complete pending review/discussion.</i> • Bowling Green – Dungiven: <i>OBC 75% complete pending input from CDT on updated design/costs at DS</i>

	<p>7. Strategy Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitch Strategy. Final approval required following workshop/rural proofing, implementation via some of the projects above and external opportunities. • Play Strategy. As above. <p>8. Asset Disposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Water World.
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Community and Culture.

Statement of Purpose	<p><i>‘Address disadvantage, social exclusion, good relations, peace building, community safety and the reduction of crime and to enhance the well-being and increase prosperity by enabling access to and an understanding of culture, arts and heritage.’</i></p> <p>Mindful of the consequences and impacts of COVID 19 both at a regional and local level within each component service, coupled with the direction that affordability is the overriding principle in terms of service provision in the short to medium term, the following priorities and assumptions apply for Community & Culture:</p>
Prioritised Activities	<p>A. <u>Combatting social isolation, promoting health & wellbeing and strengthening the social fabric:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to support the vulnerable and isolated persons through the provision of support to circa 90 active community organisations mobilised in a general Covid 19 response role and community organisations in general - support/advice with hub-based activity, volunteering, development of additional response projects to tackle isolation and mental health, governance and funding to groups. It will also include guidance on recovery planning for the community & voluntary sector. 2. Resourcing a Generalist Advice service which will provide advice on issues like welfare benefits, welfare reform, housing, finance, consumer and employment issues through telephone and online mediums. 3. Working with key community and statutory partners in relation to tackling poverty, deprivation and social exclusion - including working with Community Planning partners to address poverty issues arising as a result of COVID 19. <p>B. <u>Increased issues of Community & Personal Safety (funded)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Domestic Abuse initiatives will be actioned as a matter of priority. 2. Projects addressing issue of Fear of Crime and rural crime, particularly projects working with older, vulnerable and isolated individuals, including COAST, Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, text alert schemes will be prioritised. 3. Anti-Social behaviour – Road Traffic being an issue, with evidence of road users exceeding speed limits due to reduced traffic and anti-social driving, will expedite the

	<p>progression the agreed 'Speed Identification Device' initiatives and other related projects. Seasonal ASB issues will also prioritise the development of a range of projects to address the issue.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Mental health and wellbeing and personal safety of vulnerable young people and adults are of growing concern and as such projects working to address the health of very vulnerable individuals are a priority. 5. Crime prevention - Liaising with PSNI to identify the most relevant info and safety equipment. <p>C. <u>Supporting the economic recovery of the creative sector</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate online hub to develop partnerships, share opportunities/advice/funding news and generate collaborative working with borough-based creative practitioners and voluntary based arts groups. 2. Bespoke online creative learning activities utilising local creative practitioners, generating income and promotion. 3. Online visual arts exhibitions promoting and connecting borough-based creative practitioners. 4. Youth & Co projects online/remotely such as CRUN PPE youth volunteer project and online photography/animation content. 5. Prepare a recovery plan and associated costs for the safe reopening of facilities for public usage. <p>D. <u>Other priority areas:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delivery of Good Relations statutory duty, and associated funded programmes including provision of digital learning resources and educational programmes for access by community & voluntary sector and schools. 2. Completion of contracted 'funded' programmes and progression of Council prioritised programmes such as Peace IV, Heritage Lottery projects etc – including facilitation of Council Centenary programme, development of online/digital and other resources and programmes by museums services. 3. Progression by Museums service of preparatory/short term actions in relation to Ballycastle Museum Capital project (as agreed by Council). 4. Basic maintenance and H&S systems checks of cultural facilities including museums. 5. Recovery plan to enable opening of museums to the public, dependent on Town Hall recovery plans/timescales. 6. Monitor safety and security of museum's collections.
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Tourism and Recreation.

Statement of Purpose	The Tourism and Recreation service will work in partnership with others to develop and sustain the region as a high quality recreational and visitor destination. This is for the benefit of the
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	area's residents, the business sector and visitors hosted within our community.
Prioritised Activities	<p><u>Destination Management</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assist in the recovery of the Tourism and Hospitality sector. The Trade Engagement Team will continue to support the trade by telephone, email, ezines and social media to help them, in conjunction with the Prosperity & Place team, navigate the UK and local government support available during these most difficult and challenging times. 2. For July, August and September the focus will be on recovery and reopening. The Tourism team will work closely with the trade to promote the marketing recovery campaign and encourage businesses to avail of the Cooperative Marketing Fund. 3. Deliver a bespoke Council / Destination Marketing Campaign to key market segments in Northern Ireland and ROI to assist the tourism and hospitality sector in recovery of lost business, income and employment. 4. Partnership working with key Stakeholders and the Northern Ireland Tourism Taskforce to assist the trade on overcoming obstacles to recovery including social distancing measures and the promotion of an industry standard 'We're good to go' and the local initiative 'Safe and Alert'. 5. Establish bespoke forum for engagement with local hotel operators. 6. Phased reopening of Visitor Information Centres subject to assessment and affordability. 7. Represent the tourism and hospitality sector on TNI business working groups, marketing forum and recovery steering group. 8. The development of a new Destination Marketing website for the Council area. 9. Procurement and completion of infrastructure for new 'car touring route' traversing the borough (procurement of marketing materials and completion of works to frames and installation). 10. Assess resources and requirements for adjustment to marketing activities for winter/spring campaign. 11. Reconvene Working Group for development of Mountsandel experience <p><u>Tourism Events</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Plan for post-September events in light of COVID and assess the possibility of an autumn/spring Borough-wide event and cost. Revise event planning for adjusted regulations for gatherings.

	<p>13. Plan for revision to format of Atlantic Sessions - adjustment to limit numbers, film sessions and broadcast via online platforms.</p> <p>14. Appointment of consultancy services to develop a 10 year strategic approach to tourism event delivery for the Council area (completion December 2020).</p> <p>15. In-house design of evaluation process for small scale Tourism Events.</p> <p>16. Issue guidance to event organisers within Borough on 'best practice' event planning, management and delivery post September.</p> <p>17. Revisit parameters of Tourism Event Funding Programme for 2020 / 2021 to ensure KPI's are achievable for applicants in light of Covid-19.</p> <p><u>HALPs</u></p> <p>18. Assessment of income losses at Council's HALPs.</p> <p>19. Preparation of refund policy for static and seasonal licence holders.</p> <p>20. Adjust infrastructure within HALPs to accommodate social distancing measures on phased opening.</p> <p>21. Adjust booking system to accommodate phased opening dates from 26 June 2020 (self-contained units opening first, other facilities later).</p> <p>22. Complete risk assessments for HALPs facilities in line with COVID requirements.</p> <p>23. Resume the process for the Strategic Development of the HALPs.</p> <p>24. Carry out essential maintenance not completed in advance of opening.</p> <p>25. Assess the best opportunities for extending touring season.</p> <p><u>Coast and Countryside</u></p> <p>26. Phased reopening of public facilities subject to guidance and resources.</p> <p>27. Assessment of staffing requirements to manage outdoor recreational spaces with high public usage over the summer months.</p> <p>28. Ongoing inspection and COVID risk assessments of outdoor spaces within T&R remit.</p> <p>29. Action the repair of estate and monitor progress regarding works. Continually risk assess key sites to protect public and recommend actions regarding access to public.</p> <p>30. Prepare draft policy for approval on assertion of Public Rights of Way.</p> <p>31. Complete report on Portrush Public ROW Investigations for Causeway Street.</p>
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	<p>32. Complete scoping study for all potential Greenway Projects. Plan workshop Autumn 2020.</p> <p>33. Review of first year's operation at Garvagh Forest Mountain Bike facility. Growth market assessment</p> <p>34. Review of CC&GHT workplan for 2019/20. Options for funding, core costs 2020/21.</p> <p>35. Review Local Bio-diversity Action Plan.</p> <p>36. Development of ToR for Council's approach to Beach & Coastal Management</p> <p><u>Capital Projects</u></p> <p>37. Subject to affordability and Council approval including Planning.</p> <p>Stage 3 completion on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Appalachian Trail. • Lower Bann upgrade Marina facilities at Drumaheglis. • Portaneevy Trailhead and Scenic Viewpoint. <p>Planning approval required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magheracross scenic viewpoint and trailhead. • Lower Bann upgrade facilities. <p>Advancement of Cooperation project on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rathlin Island East Lighthouse.
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The Funding Unit.

Statement of Purpose	'To support the Council's strategic and operational planning activities by identifying and sourcing funding opportunities from National, European & Transnational bodies'.
Prioritised Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The management and administration of Council's approved grant funding programmes. 2. Liaison / Partnership Working with external Funders including NI Assembly Departments. 3. The administration and delivery of grant funding programmes relevant to the consequences of Covid 19. (Covid 19 Community Contingency Fund Strand 1, Strand 2, Strand 3; Rural Business Development Grant Scheme – Covid 19 Business Recovery Grants; 4. Monitoring and reporting on Covid-19 Grant Funding. 5. Review of grant programmes for 21/22. 6. Review of Grant Policy and Procedures (note the Councillors request to simplify the applicant's processes).

Recommendation

Council is requested to consider the service area business plans for the remaining period of the 2020/21 Financial Period.

Annex A

THE COVID 19 LOCKDOWN PERIOD - Working Principles and Activities from March to June 2020

Key Factors:

The Northern Ireland Executive agreed new powers to combat the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Relevant general points include:

- Nobody may take part in a gathering in a public place of more than two people.
- Anyone who can work from home must work from home.
- Every employer must take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of employees during the COVID-19 emergency, whether working from home or in the workplace
- No employer should compel an employee to come to work if it is feasible to work from home, therefore employers must facilitate working from home where it is feasible.

Under the new regulations, the following businesses are subject to restrictions or closure:

- Cafes, including workplace canteens (subject to sub-paragraph (2) of the regulations).
- Theatres
- Museums and galleries
- Indoor fitness studios, gyms, swimming pools, bowling alleys, amusement arcades or soft play areas or other indoor leisure centres or facilities
- Playgrounds, sports courts and outdoor gyms
- Outdoor markets (except for stalls selling food).
- Holiday caravan parks.

The consequence upon Council's Leisure and Development Directorate is that all tourism, leisure, recreational, cultural (arts and museums) and community facilities were closed to the public until further notice.

In general, services / activities / programmes delivered from these facilities ceased until further notice. In a small number of cases, online activity is occurring, where it is appropriate and effective.

In simple terms Council has had "Clarity of Purpose and a Focused Remit".

Based upon the working from home principle, allowing business as normal to continue wherever possible, the Leisure and Development Directorate was active in the following work activities:

General

- Stringent financial analysis of service area revenue budgets, to understand income losses and cost mitigation.
- Stringent staff (permanent and agency) analysis, to establish the working arrangements applied to staff to allocate staff to priority work, to identify opportunities for redeployment and CJRS / Furlough.

- The work necessary to cease or temporarily suspend existing services / activities / programmes, which are not continuing at this time or have been ceased permanently.
- The on-going preliminary, business case, procurement and construction works relevant to Council's prioritised Capital Projects.

Prosperity and Place

- COVID 19 response group and action plan – includes business recovery programme, Digital Causeway, Advice Service support etc.
- RDP, including conclusion of the Village Renewal Programme.
- Continuation of Full Fibre NI programme.
- Workforce Development Group initiatives.
- Preparation for town centre re-opening, safety measures and possible joint programme with BID and others to assist in social distancing measures.
- New Economic Development Strategy.
- Growth Deal.

Community and Culture

- Community development to support the vulnerable and isolated persons through the provision of support to circa 90 active community organisations mobilised in a general Covid 19 response role. This includes support/advice with hub-based activity, volunteering, governance and funding to groups.
- The management of Council's cultural facilities, monitoring the application of the Covid 19 restrictions. Applying essential maintenance only. – support to COVID 19 response by utilising Flowerfield as the base for 7 day per week COVID 19 hub, including redeployment of centre staff to support provision of activity therein.
- Arts & Museums services - Provision of online and home based arts and heritage activities to support mental health, combat social isolation and enhance education/learning opportunities for vulnerable isolated individuals, children, young people and families - over 20,000 engaged thus far.
- Ongoing statutory funded activities:
 - PEACE IV. – delivery of programme under funder instructions.
 - PCSP. – funding to COVID related activity, supporting Covid 19 response groups and projects supporting community safety (fear of crime, cyber-crime, domestic violence, drug & alcohol misuse, anti-social behaviour, including anti-social driving)
 - GR. – online and home based education/learning and initiatives to support community sector engagement.
 - NR. – ongoing delivery including support to Covid 19 response initiatives and other groups delivering services in the top 10% most deprived communities in the Borough.

Tourism and Recreation

- The management of Council's coast and countryside remit and estate, monitoring the application of the Covid 19 restrictions and coordinating the preparation of facilities and estate for phased reopening.
- The management of Council's holiday and leisure parks, to ensure general maintenance and the security of the site is maintained.
- Deliver on Trade Engagement, Visitor Servicing, Marketing and development for the area and provide immediate support to the Borough's tourism & hospitality sector.

Sport and Wellbeing

- The management of Council's leisure, recreational and community facilities, monitoring the application of the Covid 19 restrictions. Applying essential maintenance only.
- The establishment of a Covid – 19 Coordination Hub to support the active community organisations mobilised in a general Covid 19 response role.
- The establishment of Distribution Points for the receipt and distribution of DfC Bulk Food Parcels.
- The continuation of the 'In-House Transformation' Process of Council's Major and Minor Leisure Facilities.
- The on-going preliminary, business case, procurement and construction works relevant to Council's prioritised Capital Projects.
- Review of Sports Development Unit to establish fit for purpose in line with Community Plan Strands and the emerging consequential themes of Covid 19 in respect of wellbeing, physical activity and the development / recovery of sports clubs.

Funding Unit

- The management and administration of Council's approved grant funding programmes.
- The amendment of Council's approved grant funding programmes relevant to the consequences of Covid 19.
- The management and administration of the verification and claims process for all Council grant funding activity including all COVID-19 Grant income streams.
- Seeking additional funding from external agencies / Govt Departments regarding the provision of Covid-19 Grant funding.