

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	City Growth and Resources Committee
DATE	11 May 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Socio-Economic Rescue Plan Final Update
REPORT NUMBER	COM/21/099
CHIEF OFFICER	Richard Sweetnam
REPORT AUTHOR	Ishbel Greig
TERMS OF REFERENCE	3.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a final update to Committee on the delivery of the Socio-Economic Rescue Plan 2020/21.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes that the Socio-Economic Rescue Plan actions for 2020/21 are now complete, the successful delivery of this plan, and next steps for any open actions in 2021/22.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Socio-Economic Rescue Plan 2020/2021 was approved by Urgent Business Committee (COM/20/098) on 30 June 2020 and by the Community Planning Aberdeen Board on 01 July 2020.

- 3.2 An Implementation Group was formed to oversee the delivery of actions across the Business, People and Place themes. The Implementation Group met monthly and was attended by officers of Aberdeen City Council and representatives of Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE), Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, VisitAberdeenshire, Scottish Enterprise, Business Gateway, Skills Development Scotland, ACVO, Aberdeen Inspired, North East Scotland College (NESCOL) and Culture Aberdeen.

Update

- 3.3 The rescue plan was intended to be a short term 'rescue response' to the immediate effects of the economic crisis as a result of Covid-19, and was scheduled to end on 31st March 2021.

- 3.4 As the crisis continued, and lockdown was extended, the impact on the city's economy was deteriorating. Going beyond 31st March 2021, the need and demand has remained, and in this sense, the focus has shifted from 'immediate response' towards medium and longer term recovery actions.
- 3.5 When published, it was the intention for this plan to become embedded into the Community Planning Aberdeen structure, using CPA Outcome Improvement Groups to drive delivery. Therefore, it was agreed at the Community Planning Aberdeen Board Meeting on 22 February 2021, that any open actions would be integrated with the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the Community Planning Aberdeen governance structure.
- 3.6 Following the conclusion of the action plan on 31st March 2021, the 75 actions in the plan were categorised as one of the following:
- Complete
 - Continuing
 - Closed
 - Integrated with an existing CPA Improvement Project
 - To be considered for a new project as part of the LOIP refresh

Appendix 1 shows the next steps for each of the actions. The status of the 75 actions on 31st March 2021 was:

Complete	23
Continuing	30
Closed	5
Integrated with existing LOIP project	14
To be considered for a new LOIP project	3
Total	75

- 3.7 The Rescue Plan was split between three themes of 'business', 'people' and 'place', aligning to the three main themes of the LOIP.

Business Theme

- 3.8 Of the 21 actions in the business theme, 7 of these were completed, 9 are continuing, 2 closed, 1 is being integrated with an existing improvement project and 1 will be considered for a new improvement project.

Key outputs from the business theme have included:

- Development of an Aberdeen City Council Business Charter;
- Implementation of a 'Shop, Visit, Eat' local campaign, used by a number of partner organisations, particularly during the festive period;
- Development of an 'Aberdeen Gift Card', which can be used in retail and hospitality venues throughout the city with over 3,618 gift card sales to date totalling £149,490 (as at 31st March 2021);
- In-depth, tailored support provided to 40 local tourism businesses through the Tourism Business Recovery Programme and a series of

tourism recovery business webinars were run with 773 attendees in total, through 36 webinars;

- Running of 'Redundancy to Recovery' and 'Emerging Minds' webinars as part of the Business Gateway Recovery Programme to provide an insight into how to start a business, with 550+ attendees so far.

People Theme

3.9 There were 36 actions in the people theme, 8 of these were completed, 11 are continuing, 3 closed, 12 are being integrated with an existing improvement project and 2 will be considered for a new improvement project.

Key outputs include:

- Delivery of Positive Destination Planning Sessions to support young people at risk of leaving school without a positive destination;
- Maximising the use of the Hubs in three priority areas Dee - Tullos Community Wing, Don - Tillydrone Community Hub, West - Cummings Park Community Centre – to provide wrap around support including financial resilience, employability and positive mental health;
- Ongoing workforce and employability schemes such as the development of an Energy Transition Skills Academy, the creation of AbzWorks, a one-stop-employability shop and jobs portal for the City Region, a partnership promotional campaign for learning opportunities in the city, and a campaign and associated support to encourage workers to move into the care sector;
- Administration and ongoing delivery of the Kickstart Internship programme, Aberdeen City Council has secured 155 internal Kickstart posts contributing towards 348 posts throughout the city (as of March);
- Use of the Crisis Line as a single access point for vulnerable people including support to people experiencing food insecurity and maximising uptake of free school meals;
- Roll out of a Mental Health Support programme and Mental Health First Aider scheme across public sector partners and ALEOs, the development of The Prevent Suicide App, and the delivery of suicide prevention training;
- Delivery of a benefits take-up campaign to encourage people to access money they are entitled to, which will continue throughout Q2 and Q3 of 2021;
- Partnership working between Community Planning Aberdeen and Business in the Community, directing offers of support from the business community via their corporate social responsibility activities, to those in need in our communities. This has included donations of digital devices which have then been distributed to the digitally excluded, enabling them to access a variety of supports including employability.

Place Theme

3.10 The place theme had 19 actions in total, of which 8 have been completed, 10 are continuing and 1 is being integrated with an existing LOIP project.

Key outputs from the people theme include:

- Delivery of the Spaces for People project to allow people to safely move around the city during the pandemic;
- Ongoing work to develop best practice and national recovery plans for the Aberdeen Event Guide;
- A review of Aberdeen Archives, Gallery and Museum to allow venues to reopen safely, when restrictions allow;
- Expansion of Gallery Retail Space with the new 'Shop at the Top' as part of the 'Shop, Visit, Eat' local campaign to increase retail space for local designers;
- Additional cycle parking, at locations identified by members of the public, officers and schools, to encourage active travel;
- Development of the Go ABZ web app – a Smart Journey Planning Tool;
- Tracking of ongoing delivery for various Energy Transition activity - including the Net Zero Vision and Strategic Infrastructure Plan, the Energy Transition Zone Business Case, and H2 Aberdeen Business Case.

3.11 During the last Implementation Group meeting, positive feedback was provided from the partner organisations on the response by the Council and the delivery of the Socio-Economic Rescue Plan. In particular, the collaboration with the Implementation Group organisations, has been strengthened through working together to deliver the Socio-Economic Rescue Plan. To maximise these benefits, all members of the Implementation Group have been invited to join Aberdeen Prospers, the Outcome Improvement Group for the Economy section of the LOIP, either as a full member of the group or to join individual project groups, as appropriate.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 At the 30 June meeting, Urgent Business Committee approved a budget of £141,000 that would be available to support the pump priming of any actions in the Plan.

4.2 Of the £141,000 budget, £98,655 has been committed in 2020/21 to support rescue plan actions. A breakdown of commitments to date is:

Aberdeen Restaurant Week	£9,000
Aberdeen Gift Card	£15,000
Hospitality Check-in App	£15,000
Art Gallery Shop Fit-Out	£5,169
Benefit Take Up Campaign	£14,996
Support people into care sector employment	£10,000
Free weekend parking for the festive period	£29,490
Total	£98,655

4.3 A service update will be circulated to Committee members with recovery initiatives and budget allocations undertaken in 2021/22.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	Further local or national lockdown measures need to be re-introduced.	M	Open actions continue to be monitored as part of LOIP. UK and Scottish Government support in progressing strategic actions.
Compliance	None		
Operational	None		
Financial	None		
Reputational	Failure to respond to the crisis and delaying a response	L	This Plan and Governance has allowed the Council to lead a coordinated city-wide response

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The Socio-Economic Rescue Plan supported the delivery of following Policy Statement objectives – economy; people and place in support of the Regional Economic Strategy and the LOIP. The employability responses in particular aligned to existing priorities around Developing the Young Workforce. The Place actions all contributed to active travel and transport plans.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The rescue plan provided support to businesses in the immediate response to Covid-19 and to mitigate where possible against permanent job losses in the city. They are therefore unlikely to have generated increased employment in support of the LOIP target to grow jobs by 10% in priority sectors.

Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The rescue plan aimed to support health and wellbeing outcomes in the Children & Young People and Adult stretch outcomes.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The rescue plan supported the poverty and active travel stretch outcomes.
Regional and City Strategies	The Socio-Economic Action Plan's activities supported business and inclusive economic growth in the Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Skills Strategy, and the Local Development Plan 'triple aims' of economic sustainability, public health priorities and the LOIP.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The report aligns to the Scottish Government's Covid-19 emergency legislation and the Phased Approach to post-lockdown.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 Council Urgent Business Committee – Socio-Economic Rescue Plan 2020/2021 - COM/20/098, 30 June 2020

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Socio-Economic Rescue Plan Next Steps

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