

Surrey Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) – Covid-19

‘Transitioning from Recovery’: ‘Economy and Retail’

Background

Following the declaration of a major incident by the Local Resilience Forum to manage the response to Covid-19 in Surrey, the multi-agency Recovery Coordinating Group (RCG) was established to plan for and coordinate recovery from the pandemic at a county wide level. The RCG developed a Recovery Strategy with the aim ‘To restore the humanitarian, economic, environmental and infrastructure well-being, conditions and resilience of Surrey’, with the objectives to:

- Restore essential services that have been disrupted as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and associated response measures (e.g. lockdown and social distancing)
- Ensure the effective transition to a ‘steady state’, with clear responsibilities identified for the continuation of services
- Capture lessons learned and refer on to the relevant body/authority.

A number of sub-groups under the themes of humanitarian, economic, environmental and infrastructure were established, and associated action plans developed and implemented.

Introduction

In line with the objectives of the Recovery Strategy, the action plans developed by the sub-groups identified short term ‘restart and restore’ actions across public, private and third sector organisations, as well as medium and longer term actions to support the Surrey community on its journey to recovery from the pandemic.

The RCG met weekly from April 2020 to August 2020 to oversee the ‘restart and restore’ actions, as well as looking at where actions could sit in the longer term. This document sets out some of the new practices developed during the pandemic and the medium and longer term actions that have been identified to support the recovery of Surrey. The responsibility for these actions will transition to existing agencies and partnerships to take forward as part of their business as usual activity, within their existing financial framework and governance arrangements. As well as identifying delivery partners for the actions, the document also identifies an overseeing body/strategic link, who will be asked to take on a governance role to ensure the proposed actions are fully considered and implemented and communicated as appropriate.

Going forward the RCG will move to a monitoring role, liaising with the delivery and oversight bodies accountable for delivery of the actions, whilst monitoring the Recovery Progress Index and the strategic risk register to ensure that Surrey continues to recover positively from the pandemic.

Economy and Retail

To deliver clear outcomes that support the local economy and ensure the response across Surrey is consistent through the system from the local to the strategic level by working with local government, the Local Enterprise Partnerships, business and trade representative organisations, business community networks, universities and the voluntary sector.

Some of the new practices identified to be built on in the medium to longer term include:

- Identification of new/growth markets

- Diversification and transformation of sectors
- Reskilling and upskilling in growth areas
- Support for retail businesses to move online
- Additional support around financial planning and building resilience amongst micro businesses and self employed
- Remote working – virtual meetings and new approaches to management and support
- Build on existing networks and work with universities around Health/MedTech and FinTech business

Specific actions identified by the RCG for consideration for the medium/longer term are set out below. Financial implications of these actions will be included in the Financial Strategies of relevant organisations. Appropriate comms support around the actions can be provided via the MIG.

Issue/Action	Delivery partners	Overseeing Body
Repurpose empty units in town and village centres	SCC, District/Boroughs and land owners	Surrey Future/Surrey Growth Board
Targeted support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) and Micro business to support businesses/sectors to be able to deliver growth	Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Enterprise Nation, D&Bs, partnerships, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Chambers, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), community based schemes	Surrey Future/Surrey Growth Board
Targeted support initiatives for large employers/sectors – including financial support, changes to regulation etc	LEPs, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Department for International Trade (DIT), UK Export Finance	LEPs
Training and skills targeted at vulnerable groups (aviation/hospitality) – move people to high vacancy occupations	SCC, ESB, D&Bs, Further Education/Higher Education, Alternative Learning Programmes (ALPs), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)	Employment and Skills Board P3 Coordinating grp - Health and Wellbeing Board: HWBS Priority 3 – FA2 – Supporting adults to succeed professionally and / or through volunteering
Promotion of local job opportunities	DWP, SCC, employers (including Health), D&Bs	Employment and Skills Board P3 Coordinating grp - Health and Wellbeing Board: HWBS Priority 3 – FA2 – Supporting adults to succeed professionally and / or through volunteering

Development pipeline - Ensure that the planning process can consider development applications	D&Bs	Surrey Planning Officers Association (SPOA)
Improved/enhanced IT Infrastructure	SCC, fibre providers incl BT, City Fibre et al. Building Digital UK (BDUK), Public infrastructure, Independent Networks Co-operative Association (INCA)	Surrey Future
Town/village centres – introduce changes to highways configuration to facilitate and encourage active travel over the longer term	District/Boroughs, SCC Highways	Surrey Future

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