

Tower Hamlets Reconstitution and Recovery- Work in Progress

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 May 2020



Objectives and approach – from pandemic to recovery

Objectives

Minimise cases and deaths - particularly for our most vulnerable residents

Ensure affected residents get the care they need

Ensure that the impact of service disruption and people's lives is minimised

Deliver a balanced and sustainable budget and MTFS

Support to ensure the council and residents recover from the impact of the pandemic whilst continuing to respond to it

Deliver Council priorities - including a sustainable future budget - and better outcomes for residents by using the opportunities from new ways of working, efficiency and effectiveness learnt during this period.

Approach to recovery:

- ✓ ensure social, economic and health recovery
- ✓ coordinate multi-agency approach
- ✓ ensure a safe transition out of lockdown
- ✓ reconstitute and recover updated council services, democratic processes, and priorities
- ✓ manage budget implications, rebuild our income
- ✓ embed transformation, change and value for money
- ✓ recognise effort and commitment of staff and community
- ✓ support the healing process
- ✓ secure successful, timely step down of the lockdown
- ✓ Feed learning from our experiences into future work
- ✓ ensure consistent council and partnership communication

Considerations

Our approach to recovery will be developing whilst we are still in a pandemic.

The different aspects of recovery are almost all interdependent.

There is much still uncertain in terms of exit strategies, and plans are conditional and subject to change.

The timings of recovery are a key part of the conversation, but are difficult to define.



What we know – government guidance

‘Our Plan to Rebuild’ – 11th May 2020

- seeks to return life to as close to normal as possible - for as many people as possible - as fast and fairly as possible
- **THREE STEPS** of adjustment to social distancing measures:
 - Step One (**from 13 May**) – WFH, but some can go back (construction, manufacturing); schools closed; wear face-covering; unlimited exercise outside; can drive
 - Step Two (**after 1 June**) – schools to begin opening; non-essential retail open (NOT hospitality/personal care); events behind closed-doors; possible social contact (TBD)
 - Step Three (**after 4 July**) - remaining businesses open



Framework for Reconstitution and Recovery

Workstreams will collaborate on key interdependencies (e.g. workforce) & are not sequential



Dealing with the pandemic	Getting back to business	Workforce and wellbeing	Dealing with the impact	Making the most of new ways of working and innovation	National and local priorities	A new landscape
<p>Smaller scale response to ensure a range of social services for the most vulnerable</p> <p>Development of different types of frontline services and workforce including related workforce</p> <p>Build on opportunities gained from working differently</p> <p>Consider the impact on the budget, service users and staff</p> <p>Communication</p>	<p>Transition out of lockdown and emergency</p> <p>Determine the configuration and operation of frontline services and workforce</p> <p>Development of different types of frontline services including related workforce</p> <p>Build on opportunities gained from working differently</p> <p>Consider the impact on the budget, service users and staff</p> <p>Communication</p>	<p>Develop a reconstitution and recovery approach for staff including a range of interventions that support a move towards a new normal</p> <p>Deal with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss • Fatigue • Leave • Mental health • Dislocation • Support ways of working <p>Build on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowered DDs and managers • Remote working • Increased risk appetite • Acting corporately • Matrix working • Recognition 	<p>Determine the impact of the pandemic and appropriate responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homelessness and rough sleeping • Health and social care (including mental health) • Poverty and unemployment • Impact on business and voluntary sector • Safeguarding • Domestic abuse • Education and learning • Crime and ASB • Workforce (<i>crosses into the 'workforce' workstream</i>) • Finance 	<p>Build on gains and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and social care integration • Partnership working especially with the local voluntary and community sector • Community involvement in responses • Rapid deployment of digital interventions incl. democracy • Rapid adaption of existing services • Proactive comms • Neighbourhood/ environmental benefits • Health benefits 	<p>Respond to national policy and material change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy • Sectoral change • Expectation and need (vulnerability) • Health and social care integration • Finance/ income <p>Rapid appraisal on the impact on local priorities to ensure there is realignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Hall • Regeneration • Housing • Liveable streets • Poverty and welfare • Community Safety • Climate change • Cohesion <p>Rapid review of existing key strategies and plans to ensure delivery by 22</p>	<p>Renewed Strategy underpinned by revised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTFS • Transformation • Workforce plan • Communication <p>Produce a series setting out what we spent, the lessons and recovery</p> <p>Instigate a renewed approach - council not just service delivery/commissioning connector, matchmaker, convenor, - connect people with those who can help.</p> <p>Importance of community partnership and local</p> <p>Wider recognition</p>
and ability to	Resilience in frontline service provision	Staff have recovered from dealing with the pandemic	Effective responses developed to deal with possible acute demand	Opportunities realised	Renewed approach to strategic priorities (incl. manifesto)	Articulate renewed direction

Continuing Pandemic Response



Objectives:

We are still in the pandemic, and will continue to work so:

- Cases are minimised
- The most vulnerable protected and get care they need
- The wider impacts on population minimised or mitigated

To ensure we continue to have the right **structure** in place as we move into a different phase of the emergency

Key lines of enquiry:

- What resources are needed throughout the lifetime of the pandemic and where will they 'sit' and be managed? PPE, testing, volunteers, shielding support, expert advice.
- What will be the likely role of local authorities on contact tracing?
- What are the implications for Boards and the Tower Hamlets Together structure? Should any/more aspects of the pandemic response be allocated in this structure?
- What changes need to be made to the BECC, Silver and Bronze Groups and to the Borough Resilience Forum when?
- What are the links to regional structures and frameworks for recovery?
- If the infrastructure is slimmed down but needs to be scaled up when needed (e.g. a second Covid-19 peak): what evidence will trigger this and what will be scaled up?
- What planning assumptions need to be revisited?
- What future pandemic risks are envisaged and how can these be addressed?
- If social distancing is likely to be the 'new normal' whilst lockdown eases, what does this mean for:
 - Workplaces, businesses and schools
 - Public transport and other forms of transport
 - The design of public and private spaces (e.g. widening pavements and any changes to enable more cycling)
 - Enforcement



Getting Back to Business

Objectives:

To manage the council's approach to bringing services back into operation in a planned way whilst adhering to current public health advice

To provide compliant council infrastructure to support the provision of services

To review any changes to frontline operations to adapt and embed improved ways of working for both field based and office based staff.

To inform the thinking for any changes to future occupation of council buildings and support existing asset reviews, IT infrastructure roll out and new Town hall.

Key lines of enquiry:

- What is the current usable space and desk spaces within council buildings? Consideration will be given to staff seating, access pathways, customer distancing, cleaning contract, provision of PPE, sanitiser and wipes.
- The reactivation of all council office space will be on a phased basis: main buildings in initial phase followed by other council managed or operated buildings
- What are the considerations to opening the council buildings
 - Time required to deliver compliant buildings
 - Any criteria is closely aligned with the published government guidance
 - Adhere to the principle of only essential officers are returned to council buildings with minimum occupancy requirements.
 - Clarity on running costs vs closure costs
- How do we utilise our existing buildings with reduced capacity?
- What is considered an essential service? Similar to Covid categorisation or changes required (HR data) ?
- What support and equipment is required for teams to ensure buildings can operate at a reduced?
- How do we prioritise the services/staff that should occupy reduced capacity and confirm new prioritisation process?
- How do we measure and maintain staff and customer confidence to access and use our buildings?



Case study: Proposed return to work prioritisation



ed reopening of facilities allowing social
ncing based dependent on;

essential Services

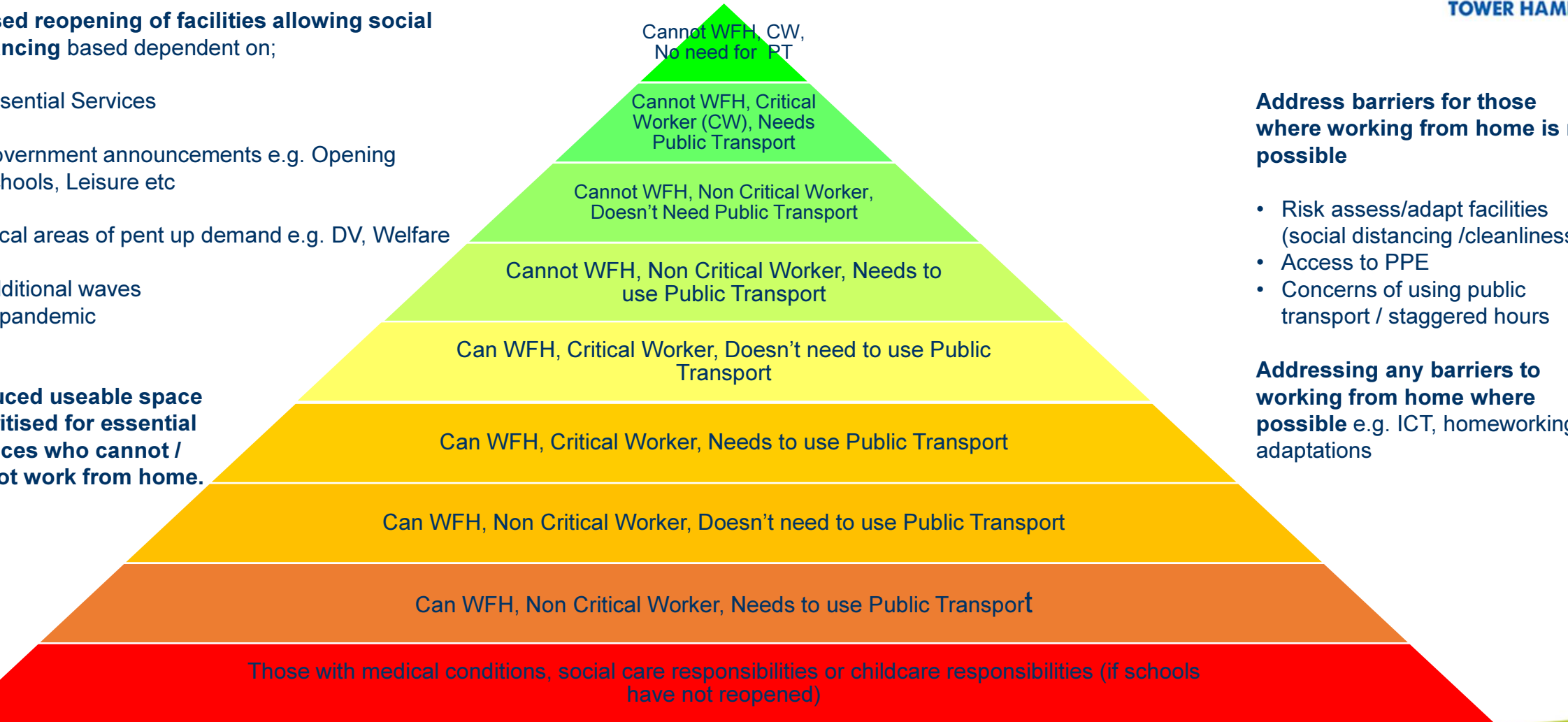
overnment announcements e.g. Opening
hools, Leisure etc

ical areas of pent up demand e.g. DV, Welfare

ditional waves
pandemic

uced useable space
itised for essential
ces who cannot /
ot work from home.

est of London
e borough



**Address barriers for those
where working from home is
possible**

- Risk assess/adapt facilities (social distancing /cleanliness)
- Access to PPE
- Concerns of using public transport / staggered hours

**Addressing any barriers to
working from home where
possible e.g. ICT, homeworking
adaptations**



Case study: Recovery considerations in schools & early years



Phased reopening of primary school starting with reception and years 1 and 6 planned from **1st June**.

Lead in time will be required to enable schools to **plan and prepare**

Significant challenges with **social distancing** (younger children, group sessions, parents at pick-up and drop-off times) need to be thought through

Staff **PPE** requirements to clarify and resource

Staff would need to access **testing** schemes

Staff and parents may be **reluctant to attend** school due to concerns about travelling to/being at school. Some teachers, children and/or parents will be at a higher risk of Covid-19 and/or live with those who are.

Staff and pupils will be sporadically **absent due to sickness or self-isolation**

Frequency and extent of **cleaning** premises to be clear and managed.

Preparations to **manage outbreaks** would need to be in place, linked to contact tracing work.

It is not within our power to open all settings (e.g. privately run nurseries).

Possible '**settling in**' implications to get (esp. younger) children accustomed back to school environment

Reopening may result in a 'pent up' increase in **safeguarding and domestic abuse**-related work.



Workforce and wellbeing

Objectives

Support the Council
Mobilise the
workforce following
the Covid-19
pandemic
Maintain and replenish
necessary the
health and
wellbeing of people
maintain
sustained
organisational
effectiveness and
resilience
Ensure workforce
change is enabled
in a consistent and
considered way
that is widely
understood

Proposed areas of focus:

1. Workforce recovery and readjustment
2. Workforce planning
3. Workforce wellbeing
4. Workforce realignment and reablement
5. People and Wellbeing Strategy

We are proposing that the **top priority areas of focus** are 1, 3 and 4 in the recovery phase including:

Space to enable the workforce to recover and provide opportunities to reflect on what has happened

Strategies to thank and recognise all employees for their contribution and to identify key contributors at team and individual

What is different and why and what and how can staff inform what is retained, restored and realigned – a learning approach

Workforce wellbeing including our future functions & services,, our infrastructure supports e.g. Health & Safety, PPE, social distancing as well as focus on mental, physical and financial wellbeing for our workforce

Questions to pose to understand the impact:

- Will home/flexible working be the new normal? What needs to be in place to support staff/managers achieve this?
- What are the policy implications and adaptations needed?
- What work needs to happen to understand the impact of the pandemic on staff?
- What health and safety support is needed for staff working at home for long periods and how we enable this?
- How can we provide opportunities to reflect and space to recover?
- When and how do we recognise and thank staff?
- How and when do we communicate with staff about possible further changes and what impact might this have?
- What are the travel to and from work and implications and staggered opening times?
- What plans do we need in place to deal with a second outbreak and ability to react and respond?
- When and how can the workforce come into the office



Dealing with the impact

Objectives

Identify, quantify, predict the range of impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on residents and businesses in Tower Hamlets over the medium and long term.

Identify the outcomes we need to achieve in order to address these impacts alongside existing/amended issues faced.

Develop appropriate ways to address the impact as a Council and across the wider partnership

Proposed areas of focus:

- i. Homelessness and rough sleeping
- ii. Health and social care (including mental health)
- iii. Poverty and unemployment
- iv. Impact on business and voluntary sector
- v. Safeguarding
- vi. Domestic abuse
- vii. Education and learning
- viii. Crime and ASB
- ix. Workforce (*crosses into the 'workforce' workstream*)
- x. Finance

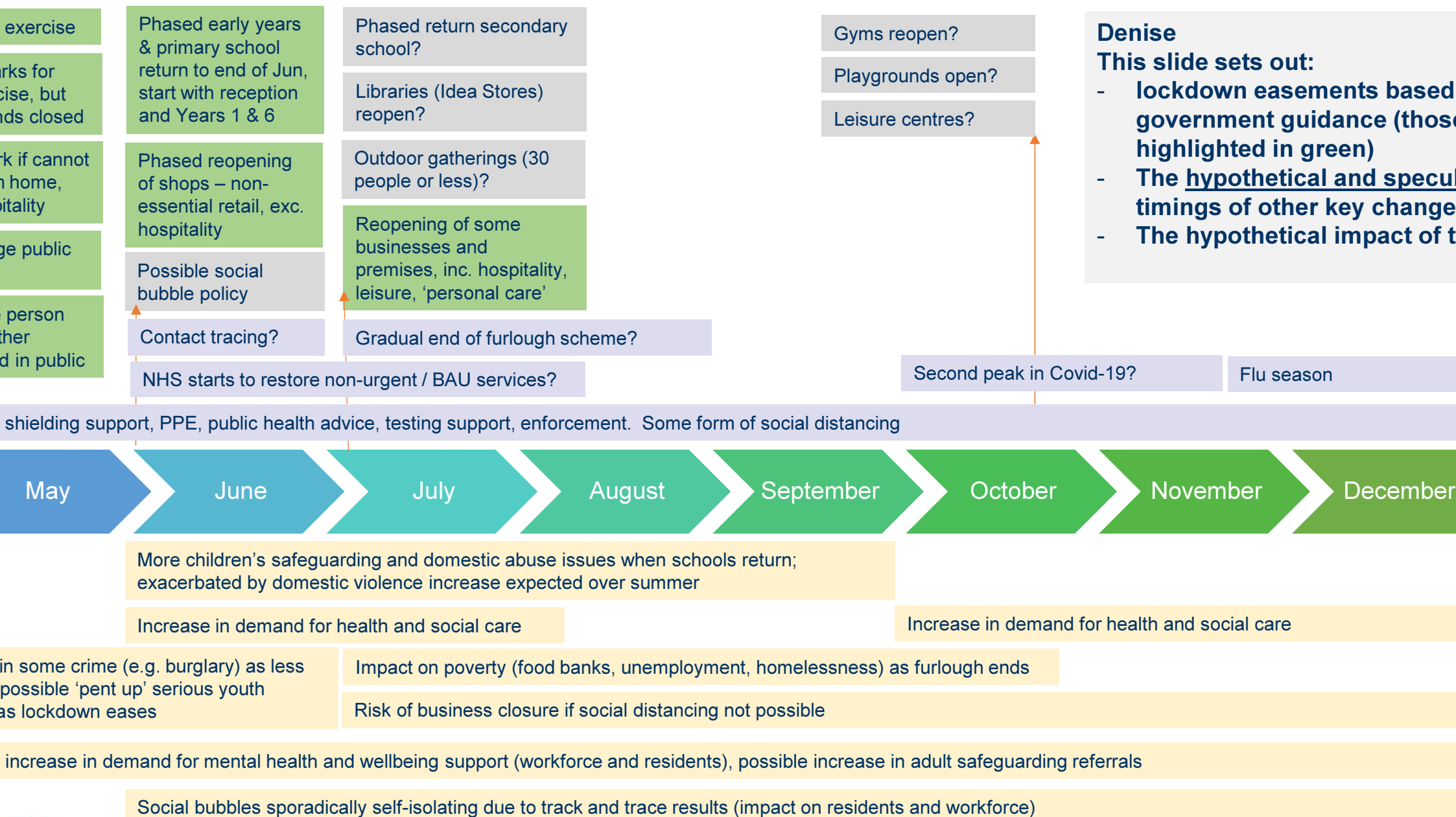
We are proposing that the **top priority areas of focus** are (i) to (iv). In addition, we will look at:

- The impact for different groups, based on the nine protected characteristics.
- The impact on partner organisations (health, police, schools)
- Any impacts that haven't yet been felt but are on the 'horizon'.

Questions to pose to understand the impact:

- What is the challenge or change related to each area of focus?
- What is the quantifiable and qualitative impact (positive, negative, neutral) on Tower Hamlets? E.g. safeguarding referral levels, unemployment levels, staff and resident feedback.
- Are any particular groups impacted more than others, and how does this compare to pre-Covid?
- For each area of focus, what has our response been to date and what lessons have we learned?
- What does the future look like, and what is the phasing / timing of possible future impacts?
- What is the national, regional and partner response likely to be? What is within our control and what is not?
- Where is the current and future response to this articulated, managed and monitored? E.g. strategic plan? Boards?
- What are the implications for internal and external communications?





incorporating new ways of working, re-prioritising and setting a new landscape



Objectives:

Develop new approaches that have been developed in response to the pandemic, and test then embed those which are successful into existing governance and delivery structures.

Agree a revised set of local priorities informed by local impact data as well as changes in national, regional and borough policies.

Produce revised strategies and plans to deliver against revised borough priorities and engage sub regional, regional and national partners to ensure Tower Hamlets voice is heard.

Ensure that all priority proposals and plans are affordable, sustainable and demonstrate best value.

Key lines of enquiry:

- What new approaches have been developed as part of the response to the Pandemic? What is the impact of these approaches, who do they impact upon and how?
- What are the implications of rolling out successful new ways of working? How can we best ensure that the delivery of new ways of working (digital/community mobilisation/partnerships etc) are embedded within the new landscape and related delivery/governance structures?
- What are the emerging priorities outlined in local data, or stemming from changes in national, regional or partner policy/focus? How do these compare with our current priorities and what do we need to de-escalate to accommodate them?
- What new governance structures/strategic documents need to be developed to drive the delivery of new priorities?
- What is the Council's role in delivering new priorities and how does this tie with place shaping going forward? In which areas should we connect, convene and support different stakeholders to come together to deliver borough priorities?
- How do we recognise and empower local stakeholders for their contribution in taking delivery forward. How do we monitor implementation of revised plans and strategies?



Recommendations

Proposed next steps:

June 2020 Cabinet	July 2020 Cabinet
Report setting out our response to the pandemic so far	A report setting out the impact of the pandemic on the borough
Report setting out our approach to reconstitution and recovery and our spend so far	Revised strategic plan (short summary) and delivery/action plan and comms plan
	Financial plan and related workforce and transformation plans

