

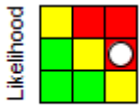

Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Generated on: 30 July 2020



Risk Code	CR68	Risk Title	Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19)
Risk Owner	Vaughan Watson	Updated By	Brian Simmonds
Year Identified	2020	Council Objective	Build thriving and resilient communities
Risk Description	<p>On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation characterised Covid-19 as a pandemic and the UK has now seen its 'first wave' pass through. As a response, NHDC has since been running on a Business Continuity footing and not 'business as usual'. Nationally, the Covid Alert Level has been reduced. The Hertfordshire Response State is 2 on a scale of 1-5 (5 being the worst case). East & North Herts Trust report that Covid-19 numbers have reduced considerably. As at 6 July 2020, only 5 positive patients and 19 queries. No deaths in the last 24 hours and mortuary at 50 per cent of business as usual capacity. Emergency Department attendance is now at 97 per cent of pre-Covid-19 level.</p> <p>The next peak may be regional rather than national. Data modelling will be used to detect any upsurge in cases across Hertfordshire and weekly monitoring should give an early indication. This virus creates the following risks for NHDC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant numbers of Members, officers and contractor staff could become unavailable due to illness or quarantine guidelines; - Subsequent inability to deliver services and make decisions; - There could be a local outbreak requiring significant response leading to a localised lockdown in Hertfordshire; - Pressure on the Council's financial position, both in terms of income and impact upon reserves; - A detrimental effect on the Council's ability to deliver 'normal' services; - Contractors' inability to stay active or to continue service delivery; - Increasing work levels (Environmental Health inspections/contact tracing, ASB, Domestic Violence, Homelessness etc.). 		
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and enhancement of current general resilience arrangements. - Improved home working capability. - Streamlined service delivery. - Changes implemented leading to ongoing efficiencies. - Use EU "Reopening High Streets Safely Fund" to support the recovery of town centres and other shopping areas. 		
Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Negative impact on the general well-being of employees and Members. - Loss of informal staff contact, i.e. water cooler conversations that often 'lubricate' service delivery. - Increased pressure on employees not infected with the virus. - Potential inability to deliver statutory (and discretionary) services. - Decrease in service income compared with relevant budgets. 		
Work Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Localised outbreak plan created (awaits testing and exercising). - NHDC Resilience Plan and NHDC Pandemic Guidance Resilience Response Plan in place. - NHDC critical functions continually reviewed. - Hertfordshire NHS Pandemic Influenza Framework and the Pandemic Flu Checklist for Businesses in place. - Command structure in place led by Strategic Coordinating Group, with supporting cells. - Corporate communications increased; regular staff intranet / internet key guidance and information updates. - Booking system in place for small number of staff who need to access the DCO. - Staff Survey carried out on home working capability and those with childcare/caring responsibilities. 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily situation reports (SITREPs) to monitor the number of staff self-isolating and effect upon service provision; now moved to exception reporting. - Lockdown tool kit available to staff and intranet resources signposting to health welfare and debt support. - Government guidance and Public Health England campaigns implemented. - Business Continuity Incident Management Team established. - NHDC representatives on relevant LRF cells. - NHDC representation (officer and Member) on the countywide Covid-19 Recovery Coordinating Group. - In Hertfordshire, 104,698 food parcels delivered, 2,110 prescriptions delivered to shielding persons; this work has now been handed over to Community First. - Play areas have reopened. - Phased reopening of Leisure Centres has started. - Splash parks in Letchworth, Hitchin and Royston have reopened (with extra safety measures in place). Due to the nature of the water supply at Baldock, a decision has been taken that it is not safe to reopen. - Decision taken to not reopen outdoor pools due to mobilisation time. - Creation of a Project Board to manage the recovery process, including opportunities to build back better. - Regular monitoring of the financial impact, including providing information to lobby for additional funding from Government. 		
<p>Ongoing Work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with partners in the Strategic Coordinating and Recovery groups to coordinate response and recovery. Situation reports to SCG weekly. - Business Continuity Incident Management Team reviewing service delivery and capability. - Ongoing updates on status of service delivery. - Emergency Planning officers keeping a watching brief. - Client officers working closely with our main contractors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Leisure – Officers from three councils working together for unified response and support. - Communications messages, as required. - Coronavirus intranet / internet pages updated as appropriate. - Ongoing support to staff, the majority of whom (an average of 270 per day) are continuing to work from home. - Demand on local domestic abuse support services has increased. - Continuing to find homeless provision for increased numbers due to requirements to provide accommodation (approximately 20 single placements in hotels compared with the usual 2/3). - Ongoing work of the Project Board for recovery. - Planning for second wave. - Testing and exercising of new Local outbreak plan being arranged. - Continuing to monitor the financial impact, including assessing medium term impacts and how it affects the Medium Term Financial Strategy. - Review of service Business Continuity Plans to reflect any Covid-19 limitations/ restrictions. - Managing the spend and application process for EU funding to try and ensure that it can all be recovered through the grant, but accepting some risk that this might not be possible. 		
<p>Current Overall Risk Score</p>	<p>8</p>		
<p>Current Impact Score</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Current Likelihood Score</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Current Risk Matrix</p>		<p>Target Risk Matrix</p>	
<p>Date Reviewed</p>	<p>06-Jul-2020</p>	<p>Next Review Date</p>	<p>06-Aug-2020</p>

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<p>Latest Notes</p>	<p>08-Jul-2020 Risk reviewed and updated by Brian Simmonds on 6 July 2020. Risk Description updated to reflect the changing nature of the pandemic. Work Completed and Ongoing Work fields updated to reflect the revised Risk Description and recently completed/current risk management activities. Brian revisited the risk scores and the risk matrix, which he did not change for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . The pandemic may be seen as reducing, but there is still no cure, no efficient treatment and no vaccine; . The risk of a second wave is very likely; . There is a chance that a second wave would have a greater impact than the first; . Official advice is that the next wave is likely to manifest itself as pockets or hotspots of infection across the country; . Although North Hertfordshire is in the lowest quartile (350 cases), Hertfordshire as a county is ranked as having the 8th highest case rate nationally (4,089); . There are signs that members of the public do not always adhere to social distancing guidance; . Lockdown rules are being relaxed.
	<p>09-Jun-2020 The risk will continue to be monitored and updated to strip out risks which have already materialised and replace with detail of the current risks and arrangements relating to the recovery phase.</p>
	<p>29-May-2020 Risk reviewed by Brian Simmonds on 26 May 2020. Brian reduced the overall risk score from 9 to 8, by reducing the Likelihood score to Medium. The rationale for the change was: The Director of Public Health Herts reports we are definitely heading down the curve, locally and nationally, and case rates in the community and hospitals are slowing. In connection with care homes, we have reached a substantial peak and cases are now coming down, but at a different rate. It is too early to say if infection rates are ramping up, owing to the “liberal interpretation of lockdown release”. This will show over the next few days. Regionally, the R (Reinfection) rate is considered to be 0.71, and similar locally.</p> <p>Previous pandemics have been characterized by waves of activity spread over months. As the level of disease activity drops, a critical communications task will be to balance this information with the possibility of another wave. Pandemic waves can be separated by months and an immediate “at-ease” signal may be premature. Our NHDC Pandemic Plan deals with ‘Recovery’ whilst cautioning to prepare for another wave of infection. At present, we are planning the Recovery of NHDC services and maintaining awareness for the possibility of another pandemic wave.</p>