



Committee report

Committee	CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date	7 JULY 2020
Title	SCRUTINY OF COVID-19
Report of	CHAIRMAN OF THE CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SUMMARY

1. This report is to help inform the Committee in developing its work scrutinising actions taken by the Council over the past four months responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the implementation of emerging recovery plans.

BACKGROUND

2. At our meeting on 9 June 2020 we considered the report of the Chief Executive detailing the collaborative approach taken by the Council and its partners in providing a rapid response to the national emergency. The Committee also commented on the report to the Cabinet on 11 June 2020 on the aims and objectives of the Island's recovery plan.
3. Prior to its meeting, the Committee submitted written questions in relation to the content of the Chief Executive's report. The responses provided will assist members in identifying key issues requiring further review. The list of written questions and the responses received is attached as Appendix 1.
4. At our meeting on 9 June 2020 five recommendations were made to Cabinet. These, together with the responses from the Cabinet arising from its meeting on 11 June 2020 are attached as Appendix 2.
5. The Committee's attention has been drawn to a report recently published by the Institute of Fiscal Studies and the Nuffield Foundation entitled – "The Geography of the Covid-19 Crisis in England." This highlights that :-

"Torbay and the Isle of Wight are the areas likely to be hardest hit by the COVID-19 crisis, the IFS said, but there is no north-south or urban-rural divide. Instead there is a 'patchwork' of problems which all impact on how susceptible local authority will be to the virus. These include places with an elderly population, a heavy reliance on tourism and high levels of social deprivation."

6. A copy of the full report is attached at Appendix 3.

7. Finally, there has been much discussion at both a local and national level about the role of scrutiny in the current situation. Fortunately, both the Local Government Association and the Centre for Public Scrutiny have been publishing a number of documents that assist members in identifying the key issues that should be looked at within the overall governance framework. A short abridgement of some of these documents and relevant key challenges are shown in Appendix 4. A number of members have also accessed webinars hosted by the Centre for Public Scrutiny and one is being specifically arranged for this authority's scrutiny and audit members looking at the financial impact of Covid-19.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

8. [Appendix 1](#) – Written questions and responses arising from the meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 9 June 2020.
9. [Appendix 2](#) – Recommendations from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee (9 June 2020), and the responses from the Cabinet (11 June 2020).
10. [Appendix 3](#) – Institute of Fiscal Studies/Nuffield Foundation report on “The Geography of the Covid-19 Crisis in England.”
11. [Appendix 4](#) – Extracts from Local Government Association (LGA) and Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) publications relating to the role of scrutiny in looking at Council actions and plans relating to Covid-19.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

12. Agenda and Minutes of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee held on 7 June 2020: <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Meetings/current/committeeDetail.aspx?cmteld=195>

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