

DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	EXECUTIVE BUSINESS REPORT		
DATE OF DECISION:	18 November 2020		
REPORT OF:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Felicity Ridgway Policy & Strategy Manager	Tel: 023 8083 3310
	E-mail:	felicity.ridgway@southampton.gov.uk	
Executive Director	Name:	Mike Harris, Executive Director Business Services and Deputy Ch Executive	Tel: 023 8083 2882
	E-mail:	mike.harris@southampton.gov.uk	
STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY			
None			
BRIEF SUMMARY			
This report outlines the Executive Business conducted since the last Executive Business Report to Full Council on 16 September 2020.			
RECOMMENDATIONS:			
	(i)	That the report be noted.	
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS			
1.	This report is presented in accordance with Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.		
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED			
2.	Not applicable.		
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)			
3.	My last Executive Business report was made to this Council in September 2020. This report outlines the activity of the Cabinet of the Council and activities to progress the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2025 since September.		
	Communities, culture and homes		
4.	On 7 October, Southampton publicly launched its bid to be UK City of Culture 2025, following the launch of the Commercial Strategy on 17 September. The news was shared across many media channels and the launch video, made by Solent University's Asten Holmes-Elliott was shared far and wide throughout the day to very positive feedback.		
5.	The Bid team were also delighted to announce the first four ambassadors: Craig David (pop star), Shelina Permalloo (celebrity chef), Lawrie McMenemy MBE (former manager of Southampton FC) and Lord Vaizey (former Minister for Culture). They recorded short videos explaining what Southampton means to them, and why they're excited to support the bid. You can find out more and get involved at www.southampton2025.co.uk . The Council is proud to be a		

	leading partner on this journey which aims to involve residents, businesses and partners from across the city and region.
6.	Our Cultural Services team strive to be at the fore front of celebrating the diversity of the heritage and communities in our city and providing access to resources. I was proud to learn that we have been awarded the status of 'Libraries of Sanctuary'; a true testament to welcoming culture and behaviours of our staff.
7.	This initiative was set up by City of Sanctuary UK to recognise the important role libraries can also play in providing a safe and welcoming space for people seeking sanctuary and for other new arrivals in our communities. Southampton is already a City of Sanctuary and I am delighted that our libraries have now become only the third library service in the country to be awarded the prestigious Library of Sanctuary title, and the first in the City of Sanctuary South West Region.
8.	We celebrated Libraries Week 5-10 October with a series of online events and activities. The celebrations were particularly poignant this year given the important role libraries have played in supporting people throughout the pandemic, even whilst closed.
10.	As part of the Mayflower400 programme our Museums teams have also been working with the CLEAR project (a local organisation working with refugees and asylum seekers) to develop English for Speakers of other languages (ESOL) resources for city residents which will be trialled during the winter months and a whole new set of educational resources developed with the Wampanoag nation have been produced for schools.
11.	Continuing our inclusion theme, I am delighted that a new exhibition <i>Face of Britain</i> , curated by the artist Nahem Shoa, has opened at the City Art Gallery and runs until 20 February 2021. It featured on BBC South and had an ITV film crew film. The exhibition contains portraits by outstanding artists who have painted British individuals from the 17th century to the present day, including works from Southampton's collection together with a selection of Shoa's own striking oil paintings of black and mixed race sitters. Launched to coincide with Black History Month, <i>Face of Britain</i> asks the pertinent question 'What does it mean to be British in 2020?'
12.	In October our employment and skills team celebrated over 30 years of service in the city, at a time when supporting the most vulnerable and marginalised has never been more important. The team have worked with over 10,000 residents who are disadvantaged in some way, and dedicated Employment Officers have supported 3,300 individuals into paid employment in the last three decades. The service has also supported approximately 2,500 voluntary placements and enabled 4000 individuals to complete training courses.
13.	The successful launch of our COVID 19 Community Champions programme has already attracted support from 200 volunteers, with plans to produce translated online media and future campaigns underway. The materials have been distributed widely across the city by teams of officers, councillors and the Police; using these as an opportunity to engage with businesses, community run buildings and places of worship.

14.	The council's two new environmental protection officers started on 21 September 2020. The officers are focussed on investigating fly tipping within the city and pursuing enforcement action against offenders. The officers are engaging with residents and businesses who are identified as failing to comply with the duty of care when disposing of waste material and are will use a range of enforcement tools including fixed penalties when appropriate.
15.	In October we demonstrated this commitment, with a significant prosecution following a successful investigation into a fly-tip in Romsey, working with our colleagues in Test Valley Borough Council. The fly-tipper, who was a resident of Southampton, admitted to fly-tipping at Southampton's Magistrate's court on 21 October, after previously failing to show up for court on October 16 and was handed a substantial £1,600 fine, ordered to pay £839.50 in costs and £240 in compensation.
16.	Southampton City Council has been awarded a Home Office government grant of £153,929 to fund COVID-19 Marshals. The Marshals will patrol the city centre and local district centres across Southampton over the winter months. COVID-19 Marshals will be part of a new campaign launching soon to encourage people to play their part in keeping Southampton safe. In their role COVID-19 Marshals will engage with the public to keep people informed and help them to follow national safety guidelines.
17.	I am delighted that MAST Mayflower Studios have been awarded significant grant funding from Arts Council England to support the provision of cultural activities in the north building of Studio 144, following the approval of the lease and grant from Southampton City Council in September. The Mayflower Theatre Trust has established Mayflower Academy Ltd to operate MAST Mayflower Studios and will be a key cultural partner within the city. This is a important step towards bringing the city together as we pursue our UK City of Culture ambitions.
18.	Southampton was pleased to support Hate Crime week by promoting a range of children's designs for tackling hate crime via social media. Officers also attended a range of online seminars organised by SPECTRUM Centre for Independent living, which were attended by a range of agencies from across the city. Southampton's Hate Crime Reporting Centre network received coverage on the local community radio station Unity 101, which provided a useful opportunity to promote plans for Hate Crime Week and to communicate to listeners the importance of its work in general.
19.	<p>This year we are commemorating Remembrance Day differently, as we come together to honour the sacrifices that our armed forces and civilians have made in a way that ensures we all adhere to important social distancing guidelines. This includes an online Remembrance ceremony, a map of the war memorials in Southampton and encouraging residents to decorate their windows with homemade poppies to pay their respects. This year is poignant because we marked the 75th anniversary of VE Day in May, VJ Day in August and it is also the 100th anniversary of the unveiling of The Cenotaph war memorial in Watts Park. Our Remembrance activity has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short, closed Remembrance ceremony with key members of the armed forces community in attendance which was filmed and shared on Council social media channels on Sunday 8 November. • History of the Cenotaph: Councillor Sue Blatchford, Mayor of Southampton, told the story of The Cenotaph which was also shared on

	<p>Council social media channels on the anniversary of the unveiling of the Lutyens designed memorial.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Remembrance bench has been unveiled at Veracity Sports Ground between Itchen and Merryoak. • Lamp posts around The Cenotaph were decorated with poppies • The Southampton 02 Guildhall will be illuminated red on Sunday 8 and Wednesday 11 November.
	Green City
20.	<p>New data has shown that the city saw improvements in air quality during the lockdown period (March-June 2020). As with many cities across the country, the reduction in road traffic led to lower levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) recorded during this time. Compared to similar periods in 2019, average NO₂ levels across the city reduced by 12% as total road traffic fell by up to 55%. The Green City Plan details over 60 actions that the council will deliver over the next three years to create a cleaner, greener, healthier and more sustainable city.</p>
21.	<p>In September our Green City plan took another step forward with the introduction of nine new greener, lower emission waste collection fleet vehicles, which replaced older models. These new vehicles produce around 80% less nitrogen oxide gases than their predecessors in Southampton as well as a 50% reduction in microparticle emissions. The new waste collection vehicles will offer renewed performance reliability, with reduced off-road downtime due to faults or breakdowns, alongside greatly improved levels of emissions.</p>
22.	<p>We have now completed works to improve walking and cycling in Bevois Valley. This initiative was part of the Transforming Cities Programme which was awarded £57M by the government Department for Transport earlier this year and sets out a range of bold and ambitious infrastructure projects to improve public transport and make the city a more attractive place for walking and cycling.</p>
23.	<p>Clean Air Day took place on 8 October and we pushed the whole event online via our social media channels. This included video, images, quizzes, posts and reposts using newsfeeds and stories across a range of social media platforms.</p>
24.	<p>Shirley Infant School, Mansbridge Primary School and Freemantle C of E Community Academy are all beginning School Streets schemes in November. The initiative will see the roads outside the schools closed to vehicles at drop-off and pick-up times to provide more space for social distancing and create a greener, healthier and more pleasant atmosphere on the school run. The measures will also contribute to a safer environment, giving more families the confidence to walk, cycle or scoot to school instead of travelling by car.</p>
25.	<p>Work will start in November in St Denys to create an Active Travel Zone, an area where small changes are made to the streets and roads to improve walking and cycling for short journeys. This follows collaboration with residents to develop a plan for addressing their concerns regarding traffic levels, safety and air quality in the area.</p>
	Place Shaping
26.	<p>I am delighted to announce that the Central parks, St. James Park and Riverside Park in Southampton have achieved the Green Flag Award for 2020.</p>

	On 14 October, in celebration of this excellent achievement and to show support for high quality green spaces and the fantastic staff and volunteers, we lit Queens Park green.
27.	The City Service School Grounds Operations Team have won 3 lots of a Hampshire County Council Tender. A massive thank you to Graham Pugh, Nick Yeats and our partners for delivering the winning bids. The contracts will bring in approximately £750k of income and will mean City Services will take on an additional 10 members of staff to deliver these contracts. A major success for the economic recovery programme.
28.	In September we took a big step towards our future plans for a game changing Rapid Bus Corridor running from Totton and Hythe to Southampton city centre, commencing works Mountbatten Way. The project is part of an innovative programme of transport schemes funded by the Government's Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), which in March this year awarded £57m to Southampton City Council and Hampshire County Council following a successful joint bid to the Department for Transport.
29.	In October we started work at the A334 Thornhill Park Road/Hinkler Road junction as part of plans to reduce congestion on the eastern approach into Southampton. Balfour Beatty Living Places, will renew the traffic signals at the junction to help improve the journey times of people driving on this major route carrying 15,000 vehicles a day.
30.	The £360,000 scheme is being funded by Highways England as part of a wider package of measures to improve traffic flows and provide better information to people driving into Southampton from Junction 7 of the M27. This follows the completion at the start of this year of the council's major £5.8m project to improve journey times on the A3024 Bursledon Road.
31.	Following feedback on the Bedford Place Inside-Out scheme, we have made some changes to enhance the scheme including removing some of the temporary signage, repositioning some of the planters and introducing a part time closure on Winchester Street, working with Police and Synergy Security to carry out security patrols and ensure a safe environment at night time. Together with Go! Southampton and Solent Showcase Gallery, we commissioned a local artist to spray paint some of the concrete barriers installed as part of the scheme. This has helped to bring the scheme further to life and brighten up the local area. We are carrying out surveys to monitor and evaluate how the scheme is working and are continuing to meet weekly with local businesses to get their regular feedback.
	Wellbeing
32.	The Southampton Covid-19 Saliva Testing Programme continues with a second phase to pilot the application of convenient, non-invasive saliva testing in educational settings where there is a higher risk of infection. Four schools, along with students and staff at the University of Southampton, have been participating in weekly testing since 21st September 2020, and this will continue until the end of term in December. The programme has approximately 15,000 participants registered with approx. 2000 tests per week being facilitated. The pilot phase is being evaluated, and testing will continue through to the end of term. In parallel, work on scaling up laboratory testing is going ahead, with the aim of expanding the programme in the new year.

33.	In November the fourth COVID-19 testing site opened in Southampton. The council worked with Mitie (the government's contractor) to open this new site, who are delivering on behalf of the Department for Health and Social Care as part of the Government's UK-wide drive to increase testing for Covid19. The testing sites can be located at the O2 Guildhall, Avenue Campus Carpark, Woodley Road Car Park in Woolston and Marlborough Road Car Park (South) in Shirley.
34.	In response to Covid-19 and the need to adapt services for adults with learning disabilities and their carers, the Integrated Commissioning Unit has established a Carers Co-production Group. The purpose of the group is to ensure carers voices are heard by the Council and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) at this difficult time when there are multiple new challenges for carers of adults with learning disabilities.
35.	The Integrated Commissioning Unit's Placement Service arranges placements and packages of care for adults in Southampton with care and support needs. The team has demonstrated excellent resilience and flexibility over the last 6 months. The team have been instrumental in facilitating rapid and appropriate hospital discharges from hospital during the pandemic and have reduced the average wait times from referral received to placement/package start date from 9.75 days to 5.5 days during this challenging period.
Successful, sustainable business	
36.	To celebrate its tenth anniversary, the Southampton Highways Service Partnership has just published 10 Years Together, a brochure which looks back over its achievements from the start of the contract between Southampton City Council and Balfour Beatty Living Places. In addition a video can be accessed via https://youtu.be/BUNmr0vcB2g
37.	In April we launched the SOBOT a chatbot on our website. We have introduced the chatbot to help our customers get answers to their questions quickly, easily and whenever they want. SOBOT can answer questions relating to council tax, waste and recycling, roads and parking, housing and planning and is currently available on over 550 pages of the council website. Since April we've received over 12,000 customer enquiries with SOBOT with a high success rate. Based on the questions our customers ask the chatbot has also allowed us to identify gaps and improve our online content.
38.	Southampton City Council initiated a project with Microsoft to launch the Microsoft Office 365 suite in early 2020. Despite significant disruption to the project caused by COVID-19, the project launched in September 2020 with a full roll-out to all staff. This means that staff have access to a cloud-based system which is both more secure and easier to access. Roll-out also included a support programme for staff to help with learning about the new software, which is ongoing. The project team were particularly pleased to receive 80+ staff applications to become Champions and provide additional support to their colleagues. The project continues with more technology being released including, but not limited to, better document security provisions and migration of our telephony system to be compatible with Teams (a core 365 product).

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
39.	None
<u>Property/Other</u>	
40.	None
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
41.	As defined in the report appropriate to each section.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
42.	None
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
43.	None
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
44.	None

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	None

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
----	------

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
---	-----------

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
--	-----------

Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None