



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

2 December 2020

Report Title:	LGA Recovery and Renewal Panel – Key Reflections and Action Plan
Cabinet Portfolio	The Leader
Cabinet Member	Councillor David Baines
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All
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Borough priorities Please mark X for any priority supported by this report	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	X
	Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities	X
	Create safe and strong communities for our residents	X
	Support a strong, diverse, and well-connected local economy	X
	Create a green, thriving, and vibrant place to be proud of	X
	Be a modern, efficient, and effective Council	X

1. Summary

This report provides an update on the reflections of the Recovery and Renewal Panel session held on the 28 September 2020, which incorporates a draft action plan for discussion and agreement.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i) **Note the reflections and themes for consideration as outlined at Appendix 1**
- ii) **Agree the Action Plan for implementation at Appendix 2**

3. Introduction and context

3.1 LGA Recovery and Renewal Panel sessions provide an opportunity for the Leader, Chief Executive, senior members, and officers to come together, virtually, with peers to:

- Reflect on what the Council has achieved and learnt in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Discuss with peers the challenges and opportunities COVID-19 has presented for the Council and local area.
- Consider the steps the Council wishes to take towards recovery/renewal.

3.2 The sessions help to identify a series of steps the Council may wish to take as well as the further support and good practice available from across the sector.

3.3 On 28th September 2020, St Helens Borough Council undertook an LGA Recovery & Renewal Panel. Within the overarching theme of recovery and renewal, at the request of the Council the panel gave particular attention to how the Council intends to 'reset' existing ways of working.

The panel discussion involved the following participants:

- Cllr David Baines (Leader – St Helens Borough Council)
- Cllr Seve Gomez-Aspron (Deputy Leader – St Helens Borough Council)
- Kath O’Dwyer (Chief Executive – St Helens Borough Council)
- Lisa Harris (Executive Director of Place Services – St Helens Borough Council)
- Cath Fogarty (Executive Director of Corporate Services – St Helens Borough Council)
- Sarah O’Brien (Executive Director of People’s Services – St Helens Borough Council)
- Rob Huntington (Assistant Chief Executive – St Helens Borough Council)
- Cllr Sir Stephen Houghton (Leader – Barnsley Council)
- Sarah Norman (Chief Executive – Barnsley Council)
- Claire Hogan (Principal Adviser – LGA)
- Dan Archer (Programme Manager – LGA).

4. Background to the LGA Recovery and Renewal Panel offer

- 4.1 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the commencement of ‘lockdown’ in March 2020, the LGA suspended the physical delivery of all peer challenge work including the core offer of a Corporate Peer Challenge.
- 4.2 To continue to support councils during this unprecedented period, the LGA refocused its support and adopted a new remote approach.
- 4.3 ‘Recovery and Renewal Panels’ do not replace LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and offer something distinctly different.
- 4.4 This work is there to primarily support improvement rather than providing concrete assurance and should be treated as such. The note at Appendix 1 acts a high-level summary of the key reflections from the more detailed discussion.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1 – LGA Recovery and Renewal Panel – Key Reflections

Appendix 2 – Action Plan – November 2020