

# AFTER THE FIRST WAVE

## **Preface**

Hastings Voluntary Action (HVA) is pleased to publish this document to enable thinking, analysis and discussion about the next phase of life in Hastings now that the “lockdown” phase of the COVID 19 crisis is being relaxed.

In producing this we hoped to present some of the issues and trends facing the Borough in terms of its economy but the collective future of its residents. It looks at issues of deprivation and challenge but also acknowledges and celebrates the energy of local people and organisations and the support system which was put in place.

This document does not advance solutions or recommendations. It is an analysis which invites comments and contributions so that many perspectives and voices can be part of shaping the agenda. We are keen to develop an open Town wide conversation about the future and welcome views and comments on this work.

The discussion about the future will take place in many forums from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, County and Borough, our Local Strategic Partnership and Town Deal Board. We would like to ensure that whatever view of the future in Hastings is articulated it is one which is grounded in the involvement of local groups and individuals.

Do feel free to use this document to respond to or initiate discussion. You can feedback directly to [future@hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk](mailto:future@hastingsvoluntaryaction.org.uk)

Finally I would like to acknowledge with much thanks the work of Simon Hubbard who has been instrumental in compiling this document through research and discussion. This has been made possible through a collaboration with Hastings Borough Council which has enabled this work and other activities in the joint response to COVID 19 to be undertaken.

**Version 2**  
**2 June 2020**

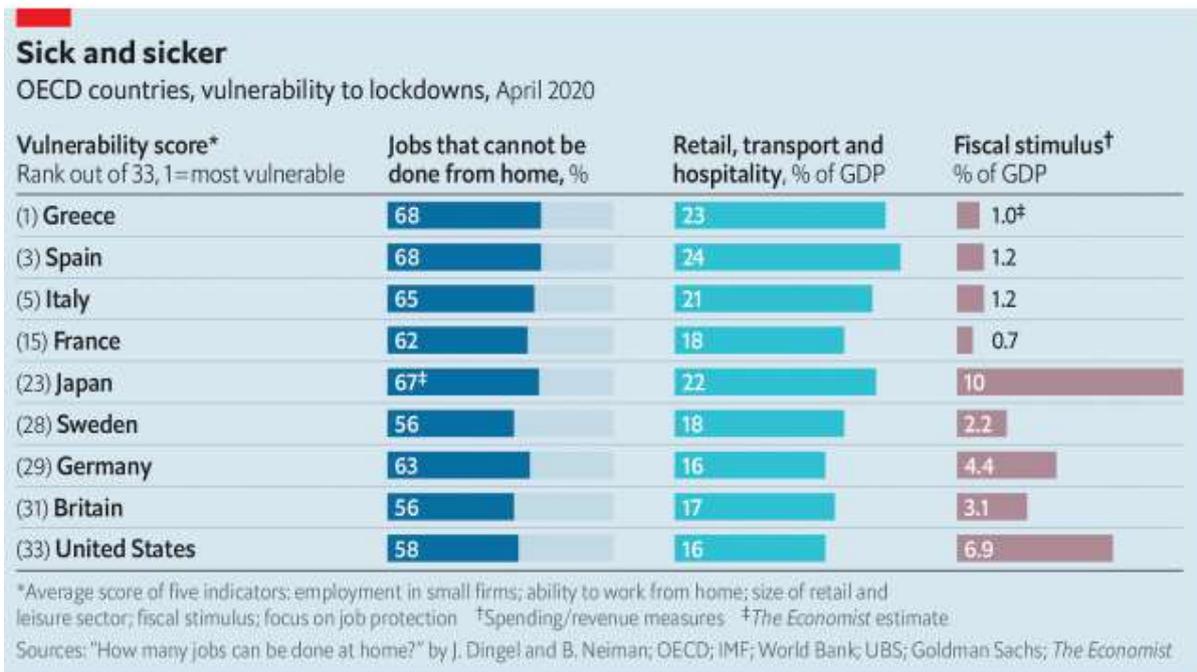
## Introduction

1. This report has been prepared as a contribution towards putting together a Hastings focused programme for recovery from Coronavirus and for living with the long term impacts of the virus. HVA have produced this report to engage with partners in the political, business, education, health, cultural, and wider community sectors. It is not intended as a “blueprint” or fixed position paper, indeed this would be impossible given the continuing flux and in particular the need to plan to respond to the rapidly emerging economic downturn.
2. The economic sphere is going to be the chief factor which will determine how a wide range of other health, community safety, education, housing and environmental issues are played out. Large scale and enduring unemployment would be incredibly corrosive and further hit tax rates and the ability to spend. Locally the borough is heavily (though not exclusively) dependent upon a mix of tourism, events, culture, parks and restaurants for its economic life but also as its USP – the music, pub and cultural life of the town is part of its self-image as much as to its visitors, students and potential investors.
3. Naturally much is made of the “new” way of doing things and adjusting to a “new normal” (undefined). This partly reflects steps needed to curtail the virus within reasonable bounds to maintain the confidence needed for renewed economic and community life. This requires drastic change in itself. It also reflects the potential lack of money for investment of all kinds in the future once the immediate crisis has passed. Even if a vaccine is available in 12-18 months the scale of the downturn will impose still more burdens on the State. There will be dramatically less money for anything that is not a key priority as national debt rises dramatically. Higher taxes to mitigate this will in themselves potentially dampen economic growth.
4. The confidence of business to invest will vary, but no entrepreneur will want to invest in a place that is not clearly helping itself and its community and is clearly making plans to attract investment in new ways of doing things.
5. This paper approaches the future and asks
  - i. What will be the issues and opportunities we face and how do these fit into national/regional thinking
  - ii. Leaving the jargon about the “new normal” aside what might we need to abandon or change and what now should we embrace. What mixture of activity might generate the best future(s)
  - iii. How will we make sure that the help people need to recover from wave one and sustain those who might have to undergo longer periods of isolation?
  - iv. What capacity are Hastings/East Sussex partners likely to have and what are the most constructive structures through which we can work together

6. Hastings (despite all its good features) remains the most economically and socially deprived borough in the South East. The next two years are potentially the classic threat/opportunity situation. We could be staring at our past as we dramatically fall behind whatever UK recover takes place. Or we attempt to position ourselves as the imaginative, positive place which will work to develop and deliver alongside a range of partners. There is a national question about a quick sharp 'V' shaped recession or a longer drawn out one. Different geographical places, communities or businesses might vary dramatically.
7. We should put forward a holistic view. The decline in traditional tourism in Victorian seaside towns accelerated trends which resulted directly in the concentration of the poorest and most excluded in seaside towns. The cycle of mental health, crime, drug use, bad housing that followed naturally put off investors and potentially new residents. We need to avoid repeating history if we can.
8. There are many different scenarios but the following four may be useful to think about
  - i. Anticipated progress – Western countries introduce relaxations between May and July, there is some restricted travel, there is still a recession worse than 2008 but recovery is relatively swift.
  - ii. As above except the virus reignites and results in winter clamp downs, no recovery begins until 2022.
  - iii. Best Case – The West succeeds in following China in flattening the curve with no big winter surge of the disease. Milder recession with economic performance restored in 2021.
  - iv. Worse Case – Lock down until the end of the year, no full release until vaccine, this could lead to the most severe recession on record and almost unimaginable contraction in the size of the world's economy. This is clearly not the path being followed.
9. However, much of what is to come will depend on people's changed behaviour pattern. This is not just about when restaurants reopen or social events take place. Attitudes to taking new jobs, moving home and travel may alter dramatically. Higher taxes and future inflation may dampen growth as might future austerity.
10. It is safe to say that factors that particularly impact Hastings and places like it are certain to occur
  - Travel and tourism demand may be slow to recover because of drop in visitor incomes and lack of confidence in overseas travel by (for instance) parents of potential language school students.
  - If virus levels climb again in London and big cities travel restrictions may be retained (and supported locally)

- The attraction base may be destroyed or damaged. It is hard to see that the entirety of the visitor economy will survive. The Pier, Source BMX, B&Bs, hotels and some restaurants may be at risk
  - Many UK customers will not wish to attend large events, music venues, pubs and restaurants until the virus is clearly defeated or there is a vaccination. Recent public behaviour over “social distancing” at tourist attractions illustrates the problem
11. It is not clear how longer term projects intended to deliver social and economic benefits might be delivered. For example the replacement of the swimming pool or the creation of new cultural facilities or the building of social housing is often dependent as is the case in Hastings on both value generated by housing and public subsidy. Similarly the potential development of a hotel on the Cornwallis car park site or the old University buildings or Queensbury House by the private sector must surely be subject to the new economic position. Whilst there are other models for development other than developer value or subsidy it’s likely that alternatives at scale will depend upon government policy.
  12. The Trinity Triangle Heritage Action Zone is continuing to make progress having held its first partners board meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> April which made decisions on some initial grants to sustain momentum. The HAZ is commissioning a thought-piece to understand the lessons learned from Covid19 that can be used to shape the delivery of the programme.
  13. The development of the Observer building and other community owned assets is being undertaken by a variety of organisations in a way that might protect the project from risk. The future of shared office space and leisure space is one of the issues that will need to be addressed but up to this point the model provide the potential for this kind of mixed use.
  14. At the same time the pressures on retail may rapidly speed up the emptying out of the town centres. Debenhams and M&S must surely be at acute risk. However, a downturn might now also impact the Old Town at least in the shorter term if visitor numbers and local confidence does not return. Central St Leonards remains a job “half done” and highly deprived.
  15. The Economist carried an article which argued that amongst the OECD countries the impact of Coronavirus would be felt very differently. Three chief factors were identified which it was suggested were key determinants for recovery
    - Proportion of jobs that cannot be done from home (higher bad)
    - Percentage of retail, transport and hospitality of GDP (higher bad)
    - Level of fiscal stimulus applied (higher good)

There are 33 OECD states and Greece ranked the worst on this basis and the USA the best. However, the UK was third best largely because of the proportion of jobs that could not be done from home was lower (better than USA or Germany) and relatively low level of retail, transport and hospitality. However the Hastings economy is likely not to share the wider UK advantages because of its lack of a large knowledge based sector and dependence on “high contact” occupations like hospitality and care.



The Economist

16. HMG and SELEP will be looking for approaches to recovery. The coast is particularly vulnerable though we need to properly assess our risk. Instinctively one would expect the recovery to begin around the London finance sector and services. The pressure for investment in the North/Midlands and in communities particularly impacted by the virus will grow and this is likely to include BAME populations in London.
17. Hastings is heavily dependent on jobs that can't be done at home Let's Do Business CEO Graham Marley told the Hastings LSP that he thought around 25% of employment amounting to 15,000 jobs in 1066 Country were tourism related. Much of this is lost and the closure of the Language Schools are a particular blow to host families, often in deprived parts of the borough. The town centre provides c6,000 jobs and big businesses like Debenhams may follow Peacocks in closing. In April 12% of shops in the borough were empty and in the short term this might dramatically increase as small business fail. Around 12,000 jobs are in a sector called public administration and health. This cost needs to be unpicked to assess impact on employment. Graham identified the lack of a knowledge based economy

meant fewer people can work from home than in other areas. Public sector employment itself is potentially vulnerable to both expenditure cuts and changes in work patterns.

18. The private sector in Hastings (and East Sussex) is primarily an economy of SME and micro businesses. According to East Sussex in Figures 2,450 businesses out of 2,765 employ less than 9 people with only 5 large businesses employing over 250 in the borough. In this it does not depart from county or regional averages. What does differ is that 1.1% of Hastings firms have a turnover of over £5m compared to a national average of 2.4%. Job density here is already low. This compares the number of jobs in an area to the resident working age population

Job Density 2019	
England	0.87%
S E England	0.88%
East Sussex	0.74%
Eastbourne	0.84%
Hastings	0.66%

Additionally the percentage of jobs in the growing creative sector was lower in Hastings than might be thought as is likely to remain a dynamic part of the economy.

All Creatives Sectors 2018	
England	4.7%
S E England	5.4%
East Sussex	3.6%
Lewes	5.3%
Hastings	2.5%

19. A small business economy is of course immediately vulnerable to failure as cash flow is compounded by destruction of markets and inability to find finance beyond current furloughing and aid schemes. However small businesses are often run by people who can respond quickly and can shed old markets. Whilst we await the recommendations for the ongoing support of business being developed through the East Sussex Study partners can consider some immediate short term actions for example
- Identifying places where hospitality businesses can expand safely outside. For instance The Stade might be used as a controlled dining/refreshment area (and others too). Not for free .... supervision and cleansing would have to be tight.
  - Could an “emergency” programme be developed to ensure that ingress or egress to areas like George Street could be controlled to encourage confidence in social distancing
  - Early engagement with Language Schools to identify the steps needed to restore confidence for 2021/22

- Temporary reopening of the CCTV system over the summer to allow reassurance that partners would be monitoring issues of overcrowding
- A programme of temporary use of empty shops and premises
- Central ticketing mechanism for Hastings events to assure safe, secure attendance
- Town wide Wi-Fi
- Public realm improvements

But most of the confidence of people to invest money and time at risk depends on a compelling vision that there is something worth doing and that positive support will be there for them. Those will need to sit alongside and complement national and regional schemes of business support.

20. Although much of the coast will share the need of much of the Midlands and North for extra stimulation it is realistic to expect recovery to begin where money continues to be made and high levels of skills can be assembled through office/homeworking. The finance sector is based in London and Edinburgh in particular and it is likely this knowledge based part of the economy will recover relatively quickly and adapt to safer working practices.
21. It is critical to remember that prior to the pandemic it was a widely acknowledged that adapting the economy and transport to achieve a dramatic reduction in carbon emissions had been identified as a crisis of the first order. This remains true but currently is not driven by the same imminent fear of death and illness as the virus. The virus has temporarily “achieved” a reduction in traffic and industrial pollution. There is much debate about how air travel may never recover. Many people may not be prepared to sit on a crowded train, tube or bus for a long time. What is our short and medium term thinking about how people come here and we “go there”. Tourism and transport are mass employers and wealth creators. How will we encourage people to come here!
22. The table overleaf shows the proportion of businesses that have applied to furlough staff under the coronavirus job retention scheme and the proportion of the workforce that is now furloughed. 73% of staff in the accommodation/food sector have been furloughed with 76% in arts, entertainment and recreation.

Industry	Proportion of businesses who have applied for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	Proportion of the workforce in these sectors who have been furloughed under terms of CJRS
Manufacturing	64%	31%
Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	69%	14%
Construction	81%	46%
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	73%	22%
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	87%	73%
Transportation and Storage	77%	32%
Information and Communication	40%	13%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	62%	13%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	76%	31%
Education	41%	7%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	35%	9%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	76%	70%
All Industries	67%	28%
Source: Office for National Statistics – Business Impact of Coronavirus (COVID19 Survey)		

## Social Factors

23. The government has decided to relax the lockdown based on its 5 assumptions
- i. The NHS can cope
  - ii. Consistent and sustained fall in daily death rates
  - iii. Reliable data sharing on rate of infection decreasing to manageable levels
  - iv. Confident in range of operational challenges (PPE etc)
  - v. Confidence that relaxation will not risk a second peak – though it is challenging to see how this has been assessed

24. This has been divided into 3 steps

### Step 1

- Certain businesses open and expected to be open. Not hospitality etc.,
- People encouraged to work from home where they can
- However people expected to go to work where required
- Avoid public transport – social distancing/face covering on public transport where not possible
- Face covering in enclosed spaces where social distancing isn't possible
- Unlimited time outside exercising with social distancing
- 14 day self isolation for most international travellers

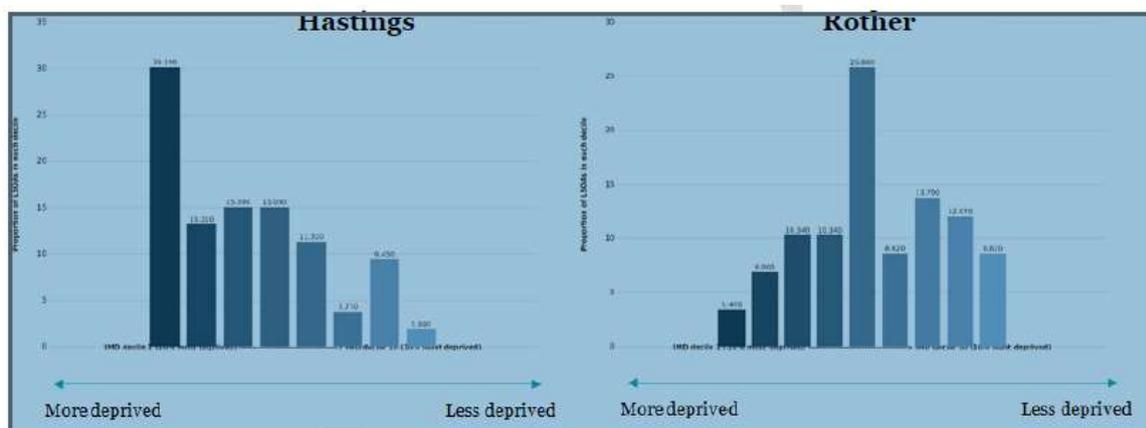
### Step 2 - Depending on the rate of infection still prevalent

- Schools gradually opening from June
- Cultural and sports events behind closed doors
- Possible small social gatherings

Step 3 – Not expected until early July and dependent on the 5 tests and the assessment of the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC)

- Opening of more high risk businesses like hairdressers, hospitality, leisure facilities and places of worship [But not venues/mass gatherings]

25. If one accepts the timeline of the government’s approach this makes the timing of many of these events very challenging. Additionally any resurgence in the pandemic would mean that restrictions were reintroduced which might be highly traumatic for individuals, business and communities. It may be this pattern will not recover until a vaccine is produced, if this occurs.
26. The Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) has said that the economy will contract rapidly but recover quickly because of the furloughing scheme and other stimulus measures. However, unemployment was anticipated to rise by 2.1 million people to 3.4 million by the end of June. The rate was anticipated to be 10% from the current 3.9% before “easing back” to 7.3%. In an economy so based on lower skills and high degrees of personal service/contact this may not be the case and a localised assessment of the economic fallout is urgently needed.
27. Long term trends in Hastings showed that economic polarisation was increasing with the numbers living in areas counted in the worst 10% having increased. However the diagram below shows how much of the borough is below the worst 50% and contrasts it with Rother which presents a far more balanced picture.



Source: Local Government Association

28. One issue is that in the past it was perceived that economic improvements were “cultural” and of limited wider benefit. Conversely others felt that major scale SeaChange type development had not produced the employment that was anticipated. The huge problems of the very “bottom” are recognised i.e. the homeless, families in trouble and SOAs in the worst 10%. There is a very substantial disadvantaged population not in this extreme position but struggling with low income, debt, multiple jobs and the grey economy. Elements of poverty and or

exclusion affect a substantial proportion of the town and this will grow if unemployment increases and is sustained. At the moment there is a substantial emphasis on those in the worst 10% but the future needs to embrace a wider view of economic and social exclusion.

29. So critical social problems that will exist for families and young people seem to include
- Getting “at risk” children and young people back into education after a sustained period of absence. It’s not unthinkable that this won’t effectively be till September for many
  - The relationships with families with vulnerable children where it is likely supervisory relationships will have broken down
  - The emergence of mental health problems in children and young families over the shutdown period that needs to be addressed
  - The inroads crime might have made into unoccupied young people’s time
  - A much larger pool of young unemployed if the economy falters over a longer period
  - Family debt. Longer term benefit dependence for many additional people will disproportionately impact poorer coastal communities
  - Disassociation and distancing
30. Older people are likely to face some pretty difficult challenges as well. Although Hastings does not consider itself an “old” town it is by national measures (just not in comparison with Rother!!). Nationally it’s likely that restrictions on older people regarded as vulnerable will be released gradually. It is entirely possible that a substantial part of the over 60s (and particularly 70s) and those with underlying physical health problems may be asked to effectively self isolate for a much longer period. Large numbers will continue to isolate themselves because fear of contracting Covid19 is so high. This will be extremely damaging for many of them. This confinement may also be shared by carers and families and cause particular issues if younger household members become socially and economically mobile (and therefore a risk).
31. Services to the community by the statutory sector will face growing pressures. Short term funding to councils has bought time but even before Covid19 Hastings faced a further need for budget reductions. Although the public may insist the NHS continue to be supported in the immediate term councils will not enjoy that degree of support. For Districts in particular a “hollowed out” future may beckon and it is necessary to consider how different sectors can build on collaboration inside this particular context. The crisis in local government funding is something the Third Sector may wish to understand more fully and engage in open dialogue.

32. The behaviour of the housing market will also be critical. Falls in property value may make development of housing more difficult as developers lose profit. Savills research predicted on 20<sup>th</sup> April that property transactions would fall dramatically but be back to 110% of 5 year average in 2022. House prices would drop in 2020 and then recover on a national basis. However, these are “travel with caution” predictions. Hastings is already marginal in terms of housing development. Even more critically an increased level of unemployment and poverty may influence the behaviour of the private rented sector who have such a huge place in Hastings. The sector played a significant role in incubating the previous decline when a benefit dependent housing market replaced failing bed and breakfast in hotels. Nationally there are indications that the demand for rented accommodation has dramatically increased because people are unable to obtain mortgages. Either a dramatic drop in house values or a dramatic increase in rent may have different impacts on the community.
33. Given the high rates of deaths in care homes nationally there is likely to be a period of resistance to placing elderly relations into care. Given the early lack of protection and training provided for care staff and the comparative lack of recognition compared to NHS staff, recruitment of care staff might be a challenge. Yet this is a growth area for employment which could be made more attractive with better terms and conditions – if we are prepared to meet this cost.
34. The reduction in social interaction is likely to have damaged the position of older people in terms of their stimulation and engagement and this may be particularly true for dementia sufferers and others dependent on human contact to maintain an “external face”.

## **Children and Families**

35. Critical to the town’s future is the rapid re-engagement of young people and families with education and a range of support services. The Youth Council members have identified a range of issues including
- Inconsistent level of support to students between different institutions
  - Mental health
  - Year 11 students needing more guidance and support
  - Contradicting false information about the virus and the future
  - Safety and support for vulnerable young people
36. Partner organisations felt there were a range of other issues
- Unsafe behaviour (groups gathering)
  - IT access for vulnerable families
  - Access to basic learning and educational materials
  - Family difficulties and potential violence

- Information sharing between agencies
- Free school meals
- Disadvantage faced by those who have lost teaching time, particularly students and their families

37. It is likely that some return to education will take place, but perhaps fully reshaped provision will not be apparent until September. The reshaping is likely to be based on lower levels of inter personal contact. For economic reasons this might continue even if a fully effective vaccine is available. This model of education will bring significant social change, particularly if home/electronic learning becomes significantly more dominant and contact hours are reduced. One option may be to consider safe non home places for students to access on line learning
38. It is not clear what future young people currently coming through the education/training system are being prepared for. How do we deal with the prospect of no destination?

### **Public Health**

39. Strong structures focused on the Sussex Resilience Forum have co-ordinated supplies and support to those people identified as the most vulnerable. The local NHS has not (it seems) been overwhelmed by the first wave of the virus and is owed everyone's thanks and support for the ongoing task of virus management while restoring confidence and participation in health services. Practical steps being discussed include:
- Resilience and mental health, particularly for the sheltered
  - Support to care home staff (who are forgotten heroes)
  - Strengthening communities/reducing social isolation
  - Catch up on non Covid19 cases
  - The exacerbation of inequalities which Covid19 may bring
  - Develop on line consultation and contact where this has proved to be of benefit to patients and staff over the crisis
  - Homeless people
40. Mental and physical health will be directly affected by the degree of social and economic engagement there is. If a very significant number of people remain furloughed or become unemployed the resultant uncertainty and poverty must impact directly (and perhaps rapidly) on health issues and demands.
41. It is suggested therefore that the health agenda is seen as central in thinking about our economic/volunteering/community programme development. Considering the useful engagement of local people in new types of volunteering or paid employment may be critical to all forms of community and economic health for the next 2 or so years.

42. It is suggested that a rapid and sizable intervention to “soak up” the coming tide of unemployment is developed as an original pilot. This should be led partly economically and partly by the health sector.

## **Food Distribution**

43. The Food Group has successfully co-ordinated statutory and voluntary provision. However, the number of groups is considerable and the methods of obtaining food or funding various. The current approach may face difficulties in maintaining support beyond the immediate crisis, but the need for support is very likely to emerge in a different form as economic contraction begins. The group has begun discussion about a “food alliance” or umbrella to bring providers together to
- Sustain public and corporate support
  - Avoid duplication
  - Ensure accurate targeting of those in need, which may change over time
  - Ensure comprehensive accurate data collection
44. If the situation faced now develops to where there are sizeable numbers of vulnerable people being recommended to display caution, a gradual return to education, a medium term problem of unemployment and a potential second wave of lockdown in the autumn/winter partners may need to consider the structure of the services they plan
- “Traditional” homeless or street community are gradually disgorged from accommodation. Pressure remains to avoid social situations when providing food
  - A potential dramatic increase in food and fuel poverty if unemployment rises dramatically
  - A sizeable reservoir of people who for health or age reasons are recommended to remain at home and avoid contact. It is likely these groups will have high potential health and stress issues
  - Potential new homeless
  - A possible return to lockdown later in the year

If it becomes evident that sustained support was likely to be substantial numbers this would be part of a scenario where the provision of food became a critical element of a longer term package of help and support. A “cross sector” view of the future is critical to develop this response.

## **Volunteering and Engagement**

45. The success of HEART and a wide range of organisations in attracting volunteers is a fantastic achievement showing how people want and need to support their communities. This can both

- Evolve into a longer term structure of support to the isolated
- Tune into emerging opportunities around the Town Centre, shop premises, young people if a creative approach is embraced
- Provide a base for thinking about a potential scheme of funded employment if funding can be obtained

In this context it is important to reconsider how volunteering can best be supported and how those coming forward during this crucial time can be supported into longer term volunteering involvement. Likewise it is an important moment to consider how the shape of volunteering might change to provide meaningful and flexible opportunities.

46. It is likely that the sense of certainty held by many that the State (in its different forms) can simply “provide” the types of services that existed pre-Covid19 will look increasingly hollow. If communities are to be faced with funding ways to support people going forward this will need to be based on a new sense of “obligation” to society as well as expectation. There is an opportunity to shape new ways of working.

47. In particular it is critical to consider how the experience of the last 2/3 months can be used to devise responses to the next phase(s) of the crisis which will be strongly economic and social as well as health related

- The future potential of volunteers
- The potential to persuade government to invest in programmes of employment to deliver a wide range of community benefits and to lay the basis for a future recovery

48. It would be helpful to review the HEART and the Isolation Station to assess the potential of these models. Their onward potential to Hastings citizens and/or their applicability elsewhere. For example the future delivery of Hastings cultural product and projection given the council’s budgetary position and the financial challenges facing Hastings Contemporary and the De La Warr.

## **Conclusion**

49. Anyone who has had the privilege of working with the partnership of voluntary and statutory bodies to address the problems cannot help but be impressed by

- The level of organisational sophistication and understanding
- The number of volunteers (alas often untapped) who might yet do other things
- The commitment to place, community and local economy
- The capacity for joint work around the recovery

50. That the likely halt in physical development, high economic inactivity and continuing isolation of parts of the population mean that more radical ideas are required to address the near and middle future.
51. The glass is as always half full. The borough has 4 advantages it can use in seeking funding and support
- i. The government recognised the town's position when it identified the borough for a Town Deal. One of very few in the South. The time is right to decide what a Town Deal looks like in this new context.
  - ii. SELEP has adopted a coastal economic strategy and the needs and potential of places like Hastings, Thanet and Tendering are central to it. Rapid work can utilise this advantage before it is lost in the push North. It needs to be made into real programmes and projects touching on housing, climate change and communication
  - iii. Our image has massively changed to one of energy and ambition. It's beyond important to maintain this.
  - iv. It sits within a county partnership structure where relationships are honest and productive in contrast to some of our neighbours. East Sussex is a small county.
52. It is critical new ideas are developed. We need a plan to maintain social cohesion and attract new interest/investment in a world dramatically changed. Possible ideas might be:-
- Revenue led schemes around ongoing community support, Town Centre, public realm and culture. For example will we need to consider how culture in galleries, theatres etc., is delivered in the future if money dries up. We need to lobby for new revenue funding to invest in creative work in community programmes rather than using it for the payments of benefits or furloughing
  - Town wide free Wi-Fi
  - Decide which development programmes are the priority – can we focus enough resource to make something happen
  - Think about what tomorrow's tourism looks like
  - A programme for alternative use of shops
  - Consider what jobs/activity are our young people going into when they leave college/school
  - Promote Hastings as a centre of positive response and progress
  - Consider future community safety issues as down turn happens – both young people and domestic violence may be particularly important issues
  - Develop an holistic approach which directly links the economic/health/community agenda and considers the costs and benefits of both

- Honestly assess the financial capacity of local authorities and others to deliver a programme of sufficient magnitude. This may require new ways of delivering work and the LSP may be a good vehicle for this
- Hastings council used to develop major infrastructure including reservoirs. What stimulus can the public, private and voluntary sectors now devise in the current context.
- Early engagement with Language Schools to identify the steps needed to restore confidence for 2021/22
- Temporary reopening of the CCTV system over the summer to allow reassurance that partners would be monitoring issues of overcrowding
- Central ticketing mechanism for Hastings events to assure safe, secure attendance
- Identifying places where hospitality businesses can expand safely outside. For instance The Stade might be used as a controlled dining/refreshment area (and others too). Not for free .... supervision and cleansing would have to be tight.
- Could an “emergency” programme be developed to ensure that ingress or egress to areas like George Street could be controlled to encourage confidence in social distancing

53. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) met to consider the way forward. It is becoming clear that the public sector as a whole will face a further period of financial volatility and it is likely citizens face a new era of tax which will itself impact on demand and employment. It will be critical to support business investment and growth and to provide an attractive offer.

54. Hastings has an LSP, a Town Deal Board and shares an economic Task Force with Rother. It is served by a variety of health, economic, community safety and transport partnerships. To be attractive, interesting and innovative we need a clear partnership board plan. A cohesive place that supports its actions and helps create the ambitions for recovery will be eminently more attractive than one which simply asks for money. In the current crisis

- i. An LSP and a Town Board are duplications
- ii. Any borough wide partnership will need to reflect
  - Economic groups and inclusion
  - Housing
  - Health
  - Skills/education
  - Community safety
  - Community empowerment
  - Climate change

With a clear understanding of how these issues relate to and feed each other.

- iii. Funding will need to be thought about differently. Unemployment imposes huge costs in terms of benefits and lost revenues and is caustic to mental and physical health and community safety. A positive image in responding creatively to the crisis across these boundaries will
- Make us more attractive in the competition for investment and visitor and say we are a place to watch
  - Tell our residents and business there is a plan for the future where we push concept of “no one left behind” which the County Council promoted.

## **Conclusion**

In this report we have presented some ideas and trends which will shape the next period in Hastings. The need to develop a clear and comprehensive plan is compelling but we need to pause and reflect on some key questions.

How can we build consensus around the priorities for Hastings.

How can we enable a Town wide conversation about the future which is inclusive and “agile”

How can we build the capacity and partnership to turn plans into reality.

Who will be work in effective partnership at a local County wide and Regional level.

As a first step this report is intended to create a framework for discussion, and by doing so hear views and perspectives from partners and wider stakeholders. We invite you to think about the future and share with us your thoughts.