



Summary of COVID-19 Related Requests from External Bodies for Council Support for the period 21st April – 31st August 2021

Date of report: 20th August 2020

Purpose: This report supplements the periodic progress reports and provides the entire outcomes of applying the COVID relief guidance from implementation through to the proposed end date of 31st August.

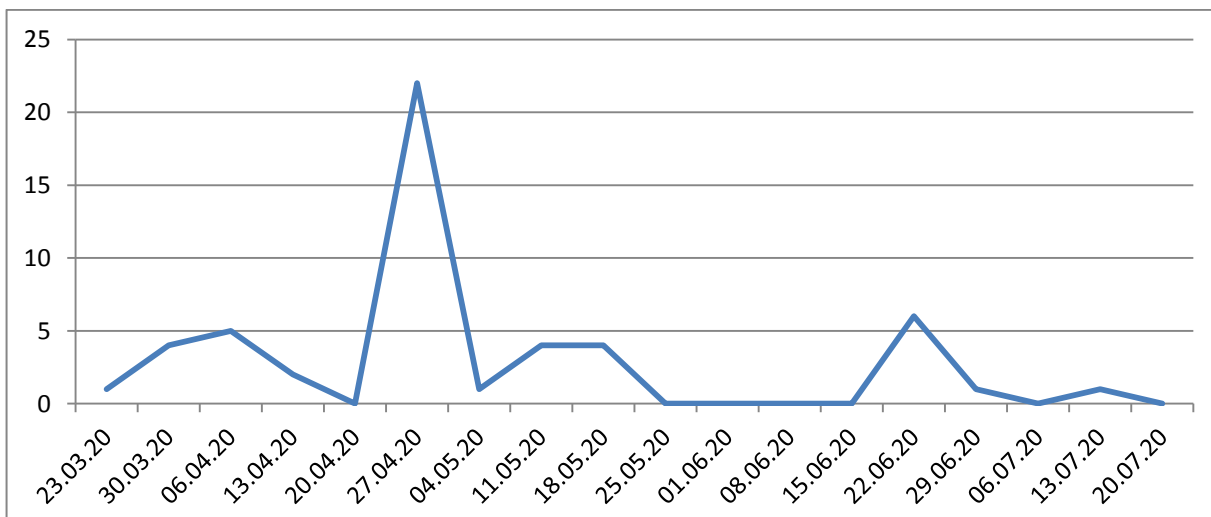
As per the agreed internal guidance published on 21st April 2020

Executive Summary: At conception, it was expected that the COVID relief guidance would facilitate a number of in-depth financial reviews and potential support to ensure that our most essential suppliers remained stable throughout the COVID period. As the COVID period progressed a number of alternative support options became available for organisations to utilise, which meant that the expectation for the City Council to provide support was less than expected.

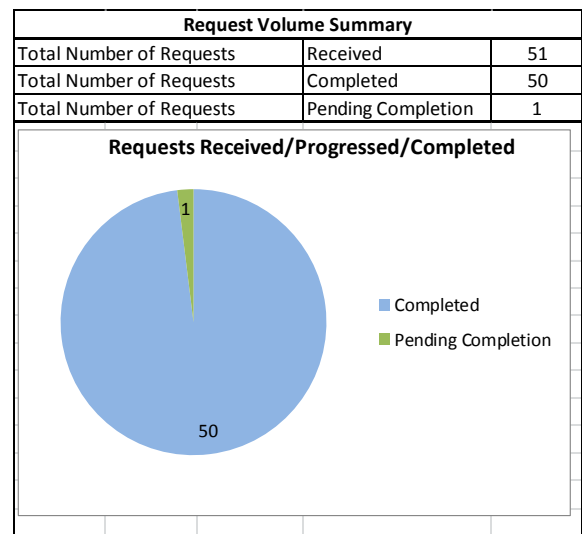
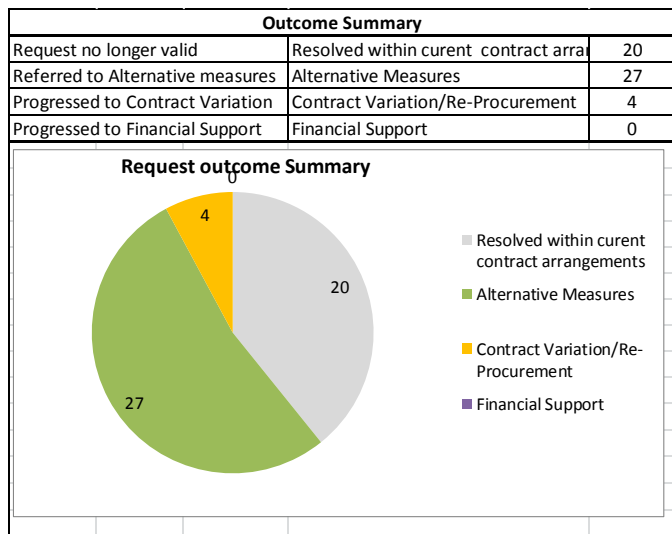
The COVID guidance therefore primarily acted as a signposting tool, to ensure organisations were utilising alternative support as their first option before progressing with any relief claim. This resulted in a large proportion of the potential claims being redirected and only 6 relief requests progressing beyond redirection. It should be noted that there have been a number of cases which appealed through CLB and have since been granted an element of relief, such as leisure services.

The officers who handled the claims worked to ensure a thorough and consistent approach. It is felt that the existence of the COVID relief guidance provided consistency in approach across the Council and ensured that all support opportunities were explored. As a result request / claims were appropriately redirected which could have otherwise have been accepted by the contract owner. In the event of a second wave the same or similar approach should be adopted to ensure continued protection of public funds.

Timeline of relief requests: The below graph shows the volume of request we've received through the COVID period. You'll see the most notable peak at the end of April, where organisations were starting to feel the impact of COVID but alternative support options were still new and not fully understood. The second peak in at the end of June represented the first stages of recovery, where organisations looked to us to support with recovery.



Support Requests Volume & Outcome Summary: The supplier relief Assessment team have handled 51 requests throughout the COVID period (as of 20th Aug 2020). All but 1 of these has been concluded. The below demonstrates the current volume of requests against progress. The outcomes are shown separately.



27 requests have been directed to alternative support and resulted in no change of contract / service and no additional financial support being provided by the Council.

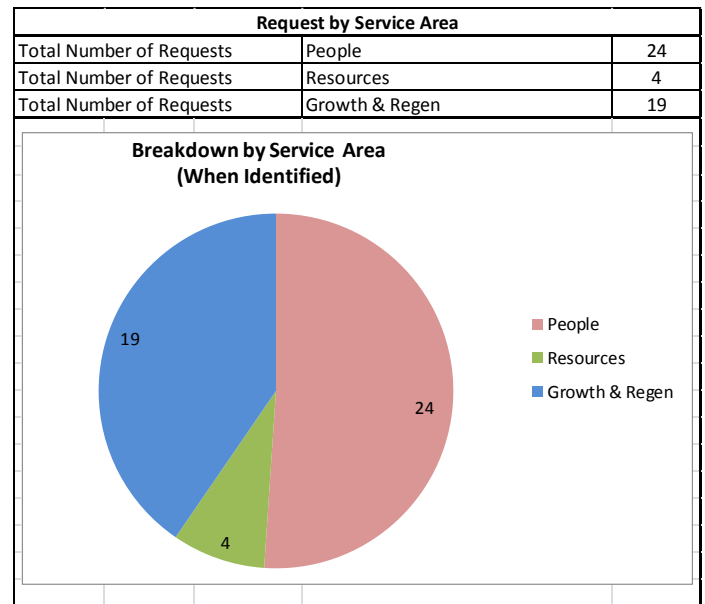
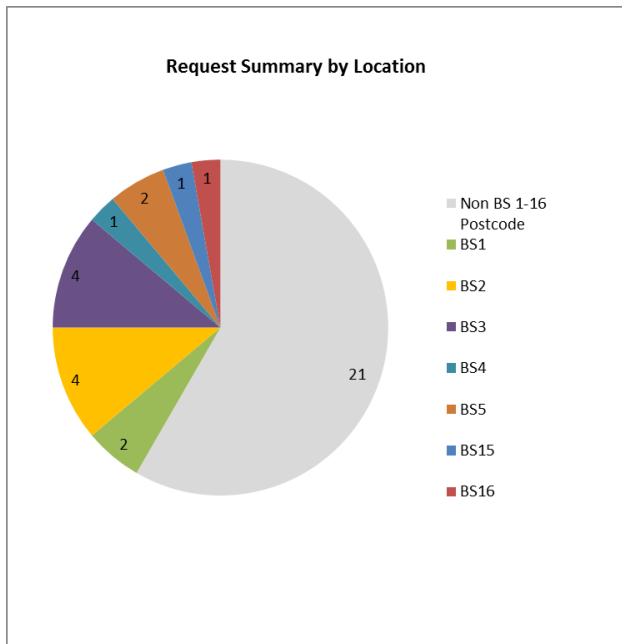
20 requests had scope within the current agreement to reduce services and payments as a result of COVID.

4 requests resulted in some element of contract adjustment, which are as follows:

Date Received	Outcome	Relief end date
01.04.20	Service for home learning for children in care. Payments have continued to supplier for learning sessions which were unable to take place due to COVID. These sessions will be banked and drawn down upon throughout the remainder of the contract. - COMPLETE	n/a – This will balance out throughout the remainder of the contract
27.04.20	The supplier seeking relief from their obligation to return 30% of profit to the council - ONGOING	The supplier is seeking relief for the qtr Apr – June 2020 only There are ongoing discussions.
15.05.20	The supplier is seeking an additional payment to cover enhanced labour & PPE costs for homelessness prevention/care. The service have agreed to fund this from their budget - COMPLETE	n/a – this will be a one off payment of £33,500, which will be subject to formal sign off within the service/procurement.
18.05.20	The supplier is seeking an additional payment to cover enhanced labour & PPE costs for youth homelessness prevention/care. The service have agreed to fund this from their budget - COMPLETE	n/a – this will be a one off payment of £24,500, which will be subject to formal sign off within the service/procurement.

Specific Request Breakdown:

The below provides data on request by directorate and geographical location.



Location	Postcode	Number of Requests
Outside of Bristol	Non BS 1-16 Postcode	21
Bristol Postcode	BS1	2
Bristol Postcode	BS2	4
Bristol Postcode	BS3	4
Bristol Postcode	BS4	1
Bristol Postcode	BS5	2
Bristol Postcode	BS6	0
Bristol Postcode	BS7	0
Bristol Postcode	BS8	0
Bristol Postcode	BS9	0
Bristol Postcode	BS10	0
Bristol Postcode	BS11	0
Bristol Postcode	BS12	0
Bristol Postcode	BS13	0
Bristol Postcode	BS14	0
Bristol Postcode	BS15	1
Bristol Postcode	BS16	1

Audit & Governance:

Internal Audit has completed a thorough review of the application of the guidance, including reporting. The object of the review was to provide an independent opinion over the Council's management arrangements for responding to requests for supplier relief as a result of COVID19. The review excluded requests for reliefs related to Care and Rents which were not progressed via the Supplier relief assessment team.

The Audit outcome was **Reasonable Assurance**.