

South Bank & Waterloo Partnership COVID Recovery Plan



July 2020

Part 1:

Introduction and Strategic Context

Introduction

The South Bank and Waterloo area of Lambeth and Southwark has long been one of central London's most important economic and cultural centres. Besides major corporations, universities and health care plus international tourist and cultural attractions, the area hosts a thriving range of small and medium sized businesses. Alongside, there are a number of significant residential communities and local facilities such as schools and religious buildings.

The London Plan identifies South Bank and Waterloo as an Opportunity Area, capable of sustaining economic growth for many years. The area generates over £5bn of value per annum, with 30 million visitors spending over £300m a year. It is now one of London's most important economic engines with annual business rates income to the local authorities in excess of £50m.

The COVID-19 lockdown has had a devastating impact on the area's economy. While activity never ceased completely, due to the presence of St Thomas' Hospital, many shops, businesses and attractions are now closed and are likely to remain so for the immediate future.

The area relies on a set of interconnected activities an 'eco-system' of businesses that are interlinked with the cultural hub. The economy will remain under threat until all parts of the 'eco system' are fully up and running again.

Lambeth and Southwark Councils, together with the BIDs for the area, the local MPs and other public, community and private sector partners have worked together throughout the crisis period both to manage the immediate impacts and to start thinking about how best to support the area's recovery - in economic, community and environmental terms. This plan sets out what we have been doing together and what we will continue to do to support local, national and international businesses in the area alongside our residents and communities to be safe, clean and Covid secure.

This Recovery Plan has been prepared for the South Bank and Waterloo Partnership, chaired by local MPs Florence Eshalomi and Neil Coyle.

July 2020

Background

Managing the crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic lockdown has had profound impacts on our communities. It has caused illness, death, disruption, financial hardship and worry for residents. Our schools and businesses have had to close. Our hospital and our key workers have worked tirelessly throughout to support those who fell ill, provide essential services and food. During lockdown, the partners in the area, including our community and voluntary organisations, the businesses and their representative organisations, our universities, the local councils and the NHS have worked together to deal with the impacts. Together we have also been planning for recovery.

Planning for recovery

We set out how we are planning to support the reopening and recovery of the South Bank and Waterloo area. We have identified a vision that's based on partners working together to achieve a safe, successful and sustainable recovery. Our plan is organised around six themes to support businesses, local people, and communities in Lambeth and Southwark. For each theme, we have set out a series of actions either taken, underway, or planned for the future.

We have worked with business to assess impacts. Some large businesses have been resilient to the changes - with office workers in the corporate and university sector able to relocate home and continue business with limited interruptions. Others face a perilous future if they are unable to reopen safely before too long.

This is a particular concern for the major cultural organisations with performing spaces: Southbank Centre, National Theatre, The Old and Young Vic theatres.

Small and medium sized organisations have experienced a similar mix of fortunes with all but essential shops closing, but some businesses being supported by government furlough schemes and discretionary and non discretionary grants. Most small businesses will need to reopen to guarantee their futures, but those relying heavily on footfall or passing trade will find it difficult to trade at levels they have historically enjoyed. Hospitality businesses, such as cafes and restaurants, need help reopening, potentially relocating tables and chairs outside.

Our actions need to sit within the context of Government guidance and proposed changes to legislation and regulation including regulation passed this week. This plan sets out how the partners involved in the South Bank and Waterloo Partnership aim to support those that wish to reopen to do so safely, in a timely way and to communicate clearly and regularly about this with local residents and the wider London community.

This collaborative work will be co-ordinated through the multi-agency South Bank and Waterloo Management Group and reported regularly to the South Bank Partnership and Forum which are chaired by the area's two MPs.

Our top five priorities

- 1. Local implementation of Lambeth and Southwark's Local Outbreak Control Plans:** The Lambeth and Southwark Directors of Public Health are leading development of the local outbreak control plans and have started consultation and discussion with local stakeholders in South Bank and Waterloo on their implications and local issues.
- 2. Supporting businesses to reopen quickly as soon as it is safe to do so:** This will require continued information and support from the Councils and BIDs to local businesses within the framework set by the most recent Government guidance and proposed legislation, including the ability where necessary to flex funding streams.
- 3. Agreeing funding and resources for cleaning, patrolling and urban management on the South Bank and a framework for further investment on key local projects:** A review of available resources from Section 106 agreements, BID resources and voluntary contributions is underway and due to conclude by the end of July. Discussions have begun between Lambeth Council and South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours on future priorities for investment and how they can be funded. Similar discussions with Southwark should take place.
- 4. Immediate and medium term public realm and transport improvements, in particular to the South Bank Spine Route:** In addition to immediate measures taken at Waterloo Road and outside Waterloo Station. Lambeth Council is planning to implement as soon as possible the pedestrianisation of Concert Hall Approach and agree a clear programme of further works.

- 5. Starting to plan employment and training support programmes:** Forecasts point to sharp increases in unemployment as immediate economic support programmes are phased out and preparations need to begin for how local businesses and organisations might help deliver likely further government employment, skills and learning initiatives.

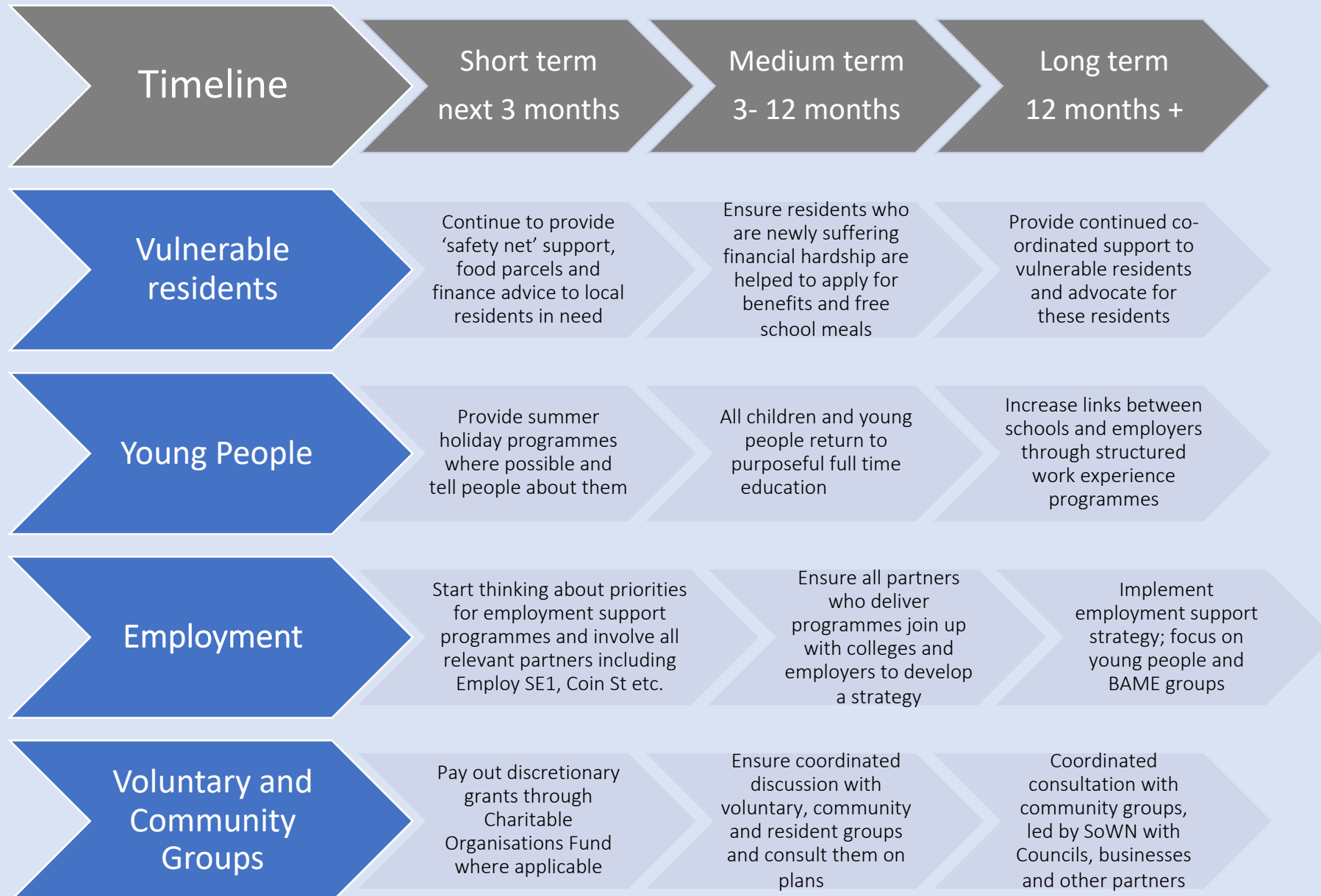
Our vision and themes for recovery:



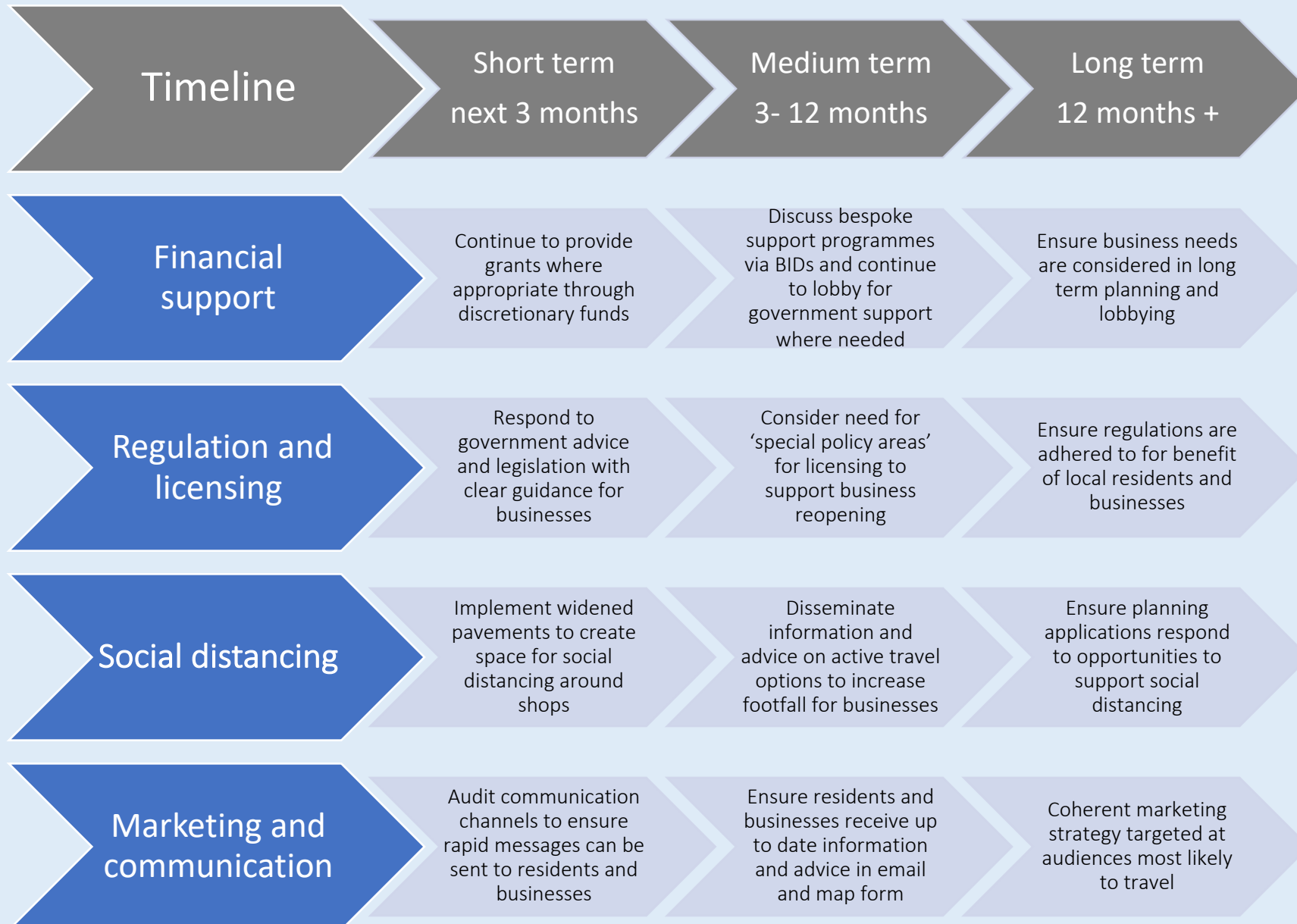
Part 2:

Working together for a safe, successful and sustainable recovery – our objectives

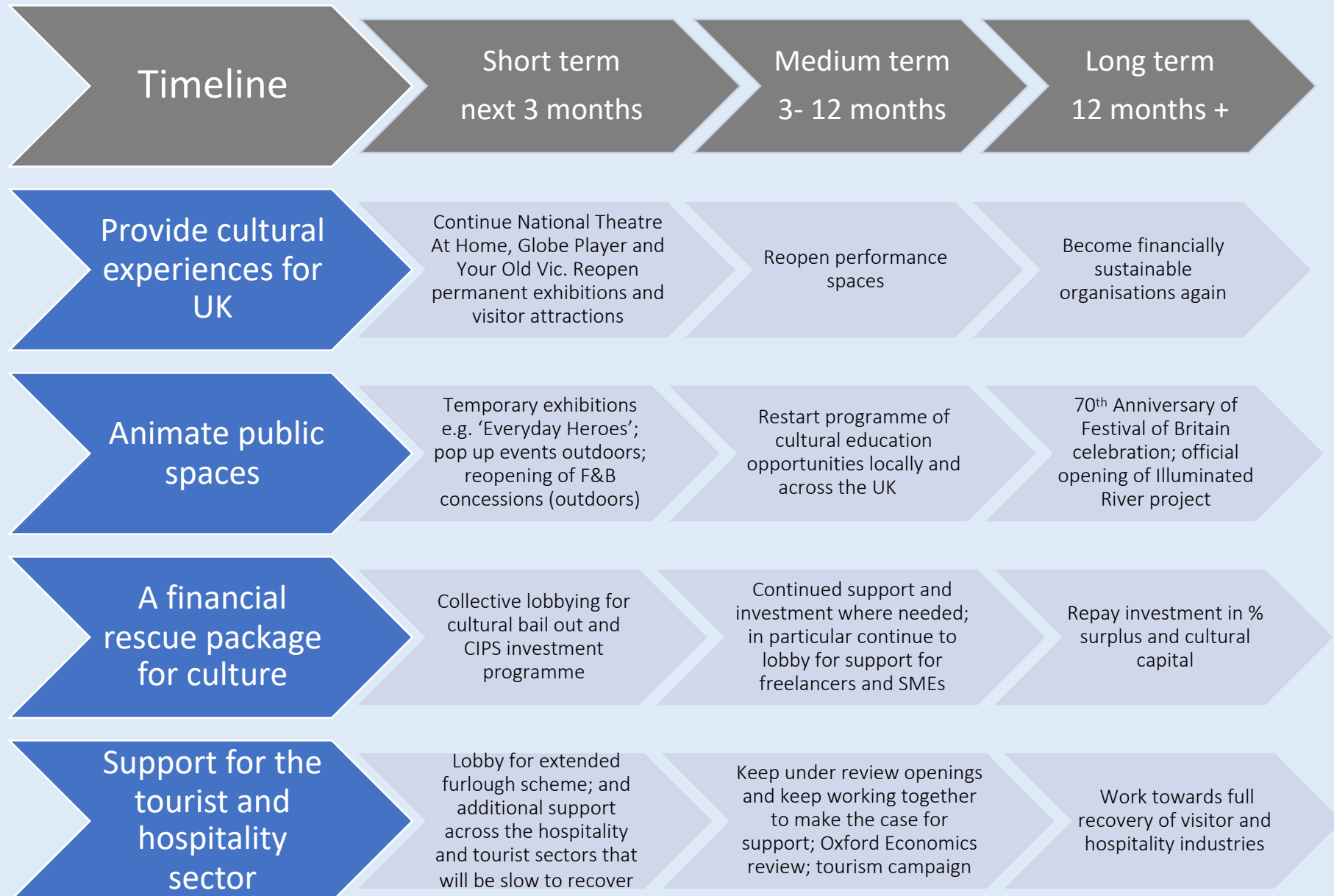
Theme 1: Supporting our communities



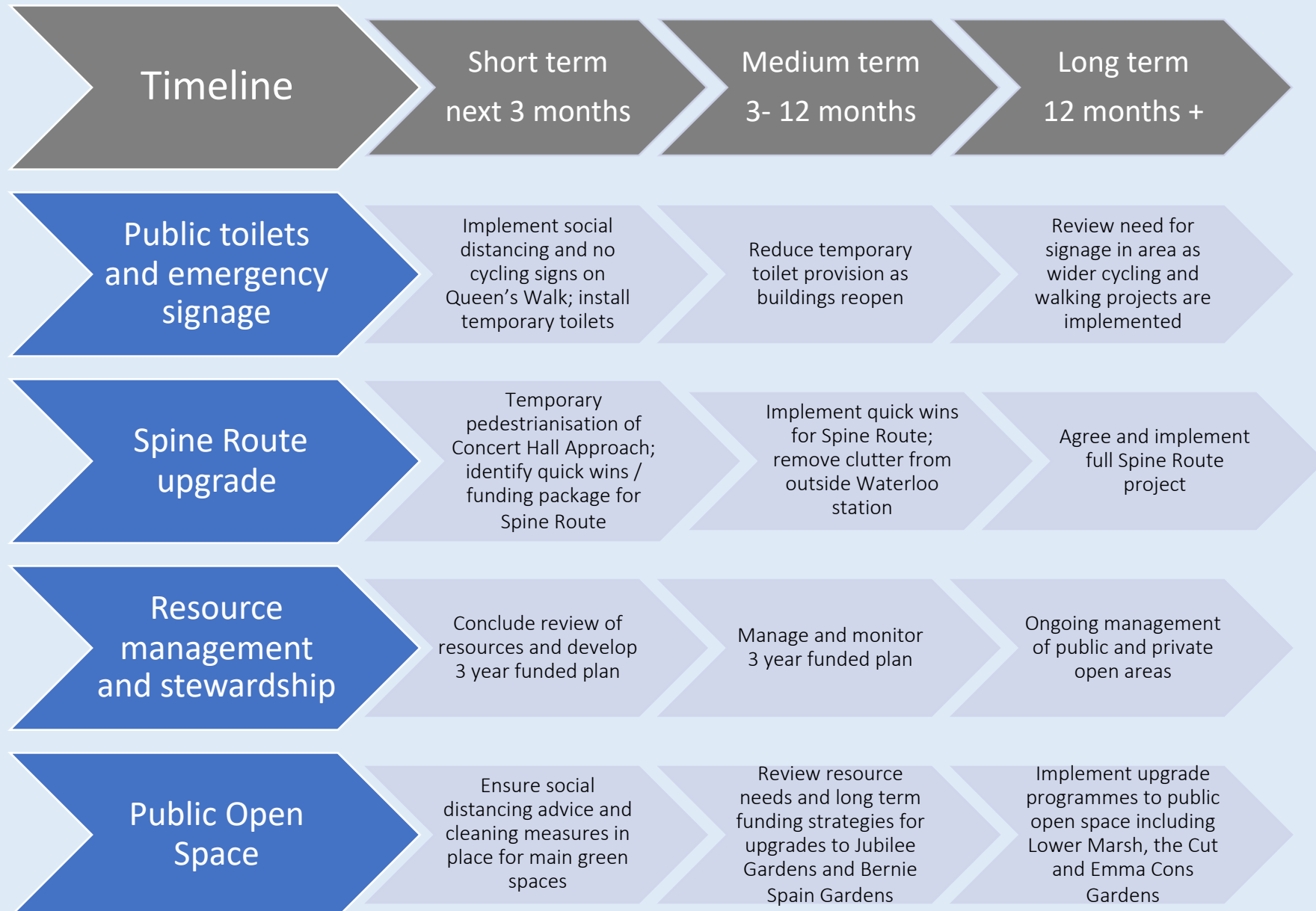
Theme 2: Supporting our businesses



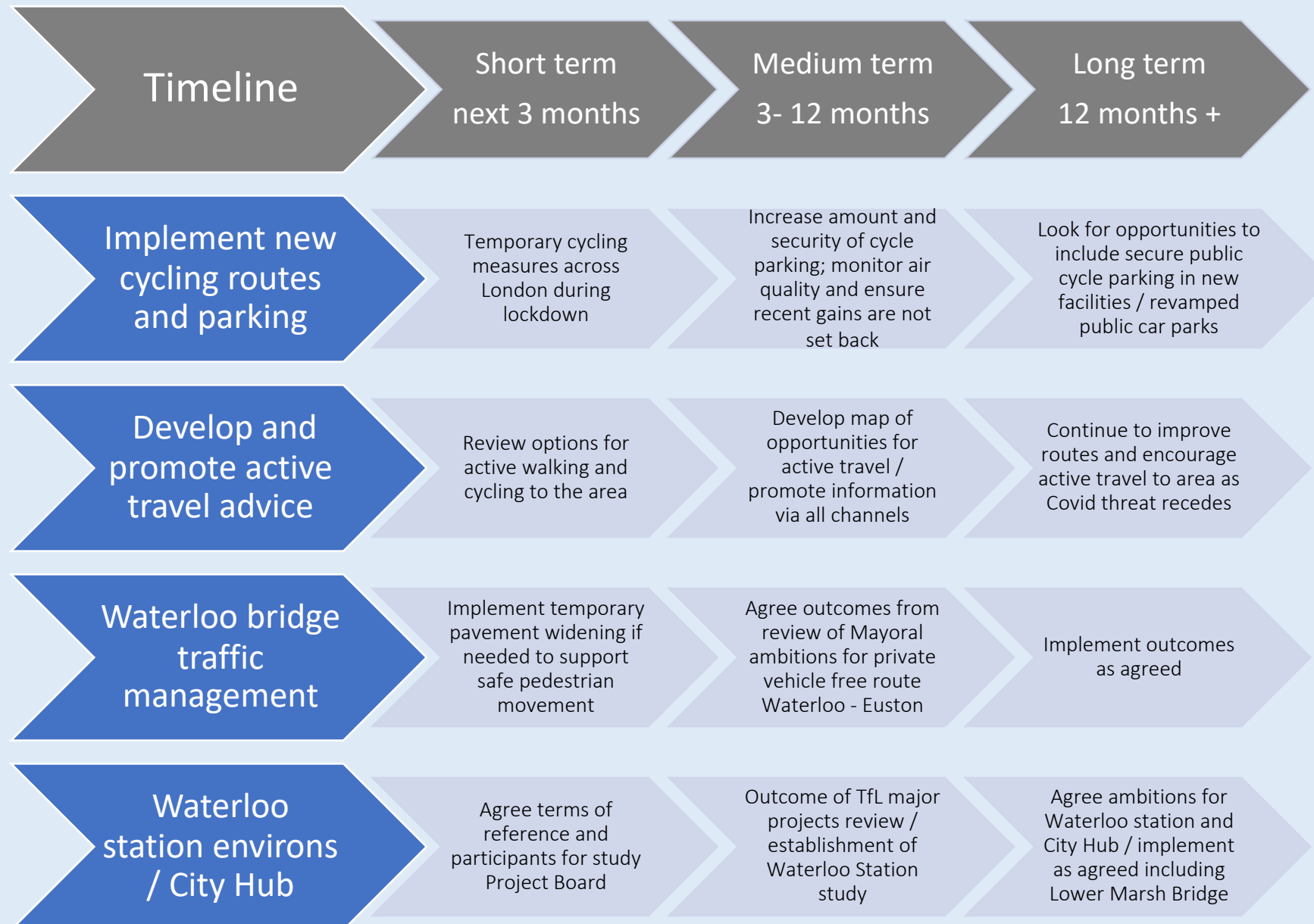
Theme 3: Supporting our visitor & cultural sectors



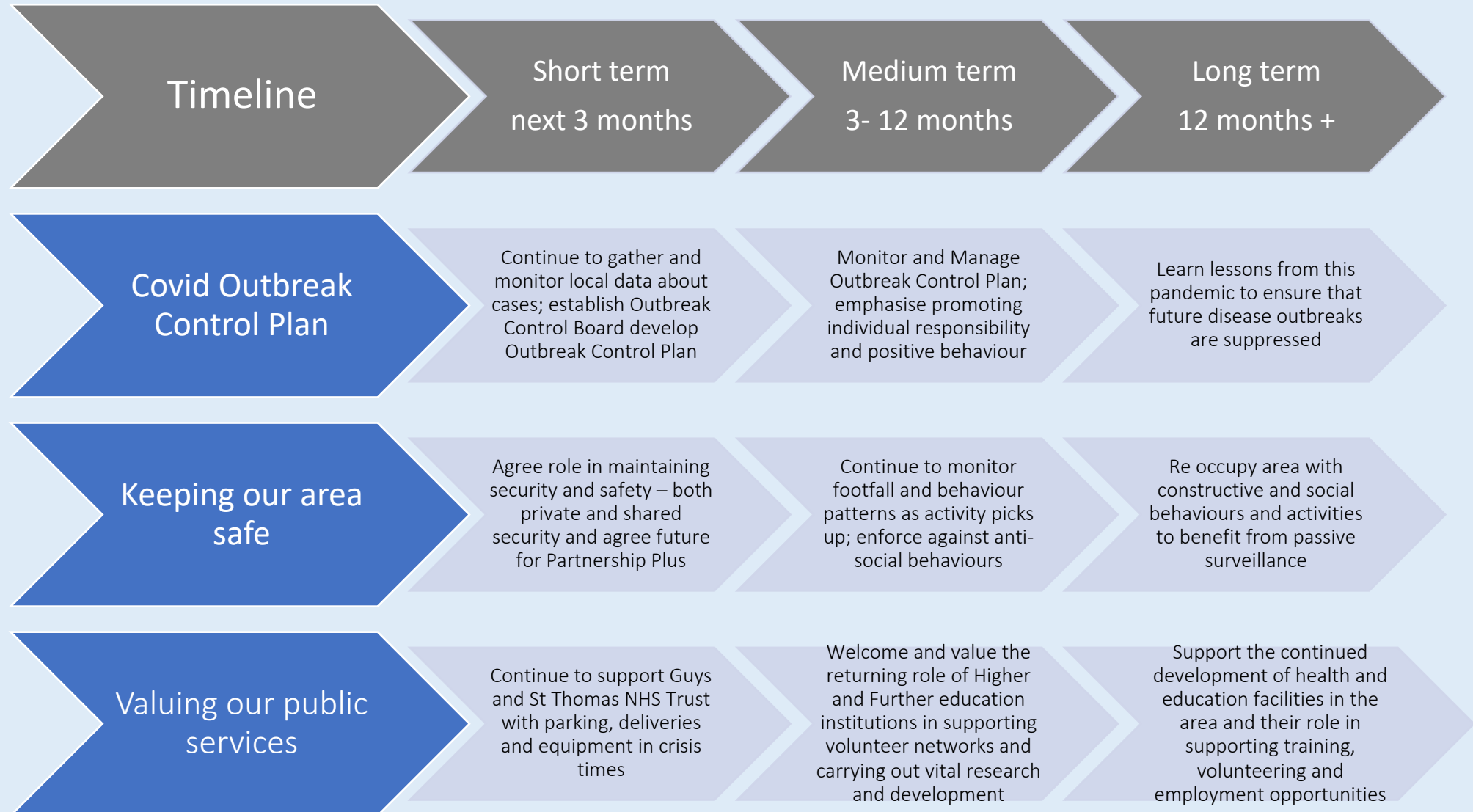
Theme 4: Managing our resources and public realm



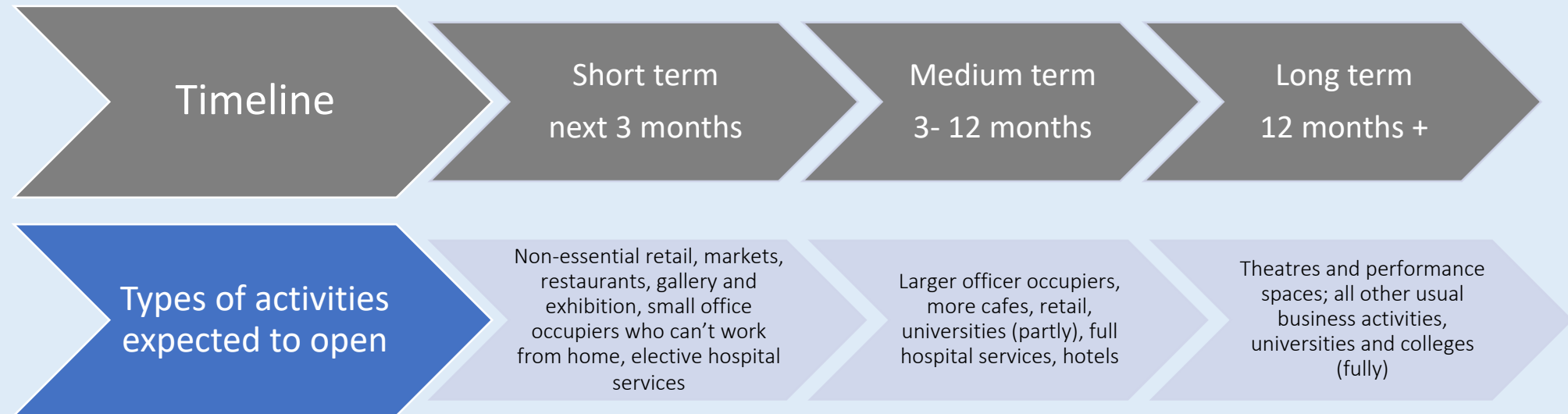
Theme 5: Supporting safe and active travel to the area



Theme 6: Protecting people / planning for outbreaks



Re-opening plan by Sector (assumed July 2020)



Part 3:

Working together

Working together

This plan has been developed through joint discussions between the following parties, as members of SBWVG:

- Lambeth Council
- Southwark Council
- Greater London Authority
- Transport for London
- South Bank BID
- We Are Waterloo BID (WAW)
- South Bank Employers' Group (SBEG)
- South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours (SoWN)
- Southbank Centre / National Theatre
- Merlin Entertainments
- Coin Street Community Builders

The South Bank and Waterloo Management Group (SBWVG) was established in May 2020 to support the work of the South Bank and Waterloo Partnership. A number of other groups exist to support and continue work in partnership in the area, in particular South Bank Marketing Group and Business Watch. These arrangements have been supported by a regular meeting of major landowners in the area to keep abreast of developments and monitor and respond to increased visitor numbers.

The purpose of this recovery plan is to ensure that reopening is safe, successful and Covid secure. The Partnership has demonstrated real strength dealing with the crisis and won't hesitate again to manage whatever action is needed up to local lock down in line with the Covid Outbreak Plan. Some examples of partnership working to date include identifying emergency parking to support key workers in lockdown and putting together a funding package around temporary public toilet provision.

Lambeth Council, SBEG and Merlin have together reviewed the ongoing resource needs of the area and funding available to support services - this review is due to conclude in July 2020.

Lambeth Council has met with SoWN, SBEG and WAW to discuss how to ensure CIL and NCIL spending reflects local resident and community priorities and will publish the outcomes of this process as soon as possible. SBWVG will continue close dialogue with community partners on all actions in this plan.

Contact details

- Eleanor Purser/ Sara Waller - *London Borough of Lambeth. Co-Chair*
- John Langley - *South Bank and Waterloo Neighbours. Co-Chair*
- Dan Taylor - *London Borough of Southwark*
- Natalie Raban - *We Are Waterloo Business Improvement District (BID)*
- Nic Durston - *South Bank BID / South Bank Employers' Group*

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