

## Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
<b>Report Subject</b>	Portfolio Recovery Strategy and Risk Register
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Planning and Public Protection Cabinet Member for Streetscene and Countryside Cabinet Member for Economy
<b>Report Author</b>	Chief Executive and Chief Officer (Planning, Environment and Economy)
<b>Type of Report</b>	Strategic

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has developed a corporate Recovery Strategy for the pandemic emergency situation.

This work has been led by the Chief Executive and Leader and overseen by a cross-party Member Recovery Board. The Board, which was an advisory sub-committee of Cabinet, has completed its work and has stood down. Cabinet endorsed the Recovery Strategy at a special meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Cabinet has invited each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to support recovery in their respective portfolio areas, and specifically to have oversight of:-

1. The portfolio risk register and the risk mitigation actions both live and planned;
2. The objectives for recovery for the portfolio;

This report represents the second update on the above documents since its initial meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

### Recommendations

1	That the Committee gives oversight to the progress made with respect to recovery planning for the Planning, Environment and Economy portfolio.
2	That the Committee notes the content of the updated portfolio risk register and mitigation actions.

## **REPORT DETAILS**

<b>1.00</b>	<b>EMERGENCY RECOVERY</b>
1.01	<p>The Council has developed a corporate Recovery Strategy for the pandemic emergency situation. The Strategy covers:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The chronology of the emergency response phase and transition to recovery</li> <li>2. The handover arrangements or recovery</li> <li>3. Organisational recovery of the corporate organisation</li> <li>4. Community recovery of the communities we serve</li> <li>5. Strategic priorities and performance for the remainder of 2020/21</li> <li>6. The roles the Council will play in regional recovery</li> <li>7. The democratic governance of recovery</li> </ol>
1.02	<p>The development of the Recovery Strategy been led by the Chief Executive and Leader and overseen by a cross-party Member Recovery Board. The Board, which is an advisory sub-committee of Cabinet, has completed its work and has stood down. The Board has met seven times in quick succession and has received multiple reports and presentations. Cabinet endorsed the Recovery Strategy at a special meeting on 15 September.</p>
1.03	<p>Cabinet has invited each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to support recovery in their respective portfolio areas, and specifically to have oversight of:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The portfolio risk register and the risk mitigation actions both live and planned;</li> <li>2. The objectives for recovery for the portfolio;</li> <li>3. The immediate strategic priorities for recovery for the portfolio extracted from the draft Council Plan for 2020/21; and</li> <li>4. The set of revised performance indicator targets for the portfolio for 2020/21.</li> </ol>
1.04	<p>The full latest version of the risk register and set of risk mitigation actions for the Planning, Environment and Economy portfolio within the terms of reference of this Committee is attached. In addition an update is provided below of progress against each of the portfolio's recovery objectives. Should further information on any of the recovery objectives be sought by the Committee that can be provide at a future meeting.</p>
1.05	<p>The recovery objectives for the Planning, Environment and Economy portfolio as established in July 2020 and relevant to this Committee are:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-instatement of Planning Strategy Group and Planning Committee</li> </ol> <p>Planning Strategy Group continues to operate successfully as scheduled via virtual meetings.</p> <p>Planning Committee continues to run successfully in a virtual format. With proposed changes to IT infrastructure, the PE&amp;E portfolio has been advised by Committee Services that the ability of third parties to parties to join meetings is under review and</p>

is likely to be introduced in parallel with new video-conference software. The April Planning Committee will be live-streamed. PE&E staff will be required to prepare procedural and administration processes to support such a change.

2. Re-opening of destination sites – Wepre Park, Greenfield Valley, Waun y Llyn

Sites remain open for local exercise only, however the car parks at Wepre, Talacre and Wau-y-Llyn have been closed to deter people from travelling to access the sites. Greenfield museum and Wepre visitor centres remain closed. Work is under way to pressure for their re-opening when the lifting of restrictions allow it.

3. Re-instatement of maintenance regimes for sites and paths

Maintenance regimes remain in place for sites and paths. A report on staffing structures and maintenance schedules is being scheduled for a future Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny.

4. Compliance with new Local Development Plan timeline

The examination is scheduled to begin on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and will comprise a seven week programme with 20 separate sessions to examine matters and issues identified by the Inspector. Information about the programme and matters and issues questions is available on the [examination website](#).

5. Provision of business support service meeting needs of Flintshire businesses

Delivery of WG funded grants remains the largest part of the direct support to businesses by the Council. In addition, day to day service delivery in supporting individual businesses, responding to investment interest and organising learning and networking activities continues.

6. Support for our local markets and town centres

The Council has run a promotional campaign for town centre and food and drink businesses which has been very successful although it has had to flex considerably around changing Covid-19 restrictions. The Council has continued the rent-free period for street market traders who have been considerably disrupted by the pandemic. In addition, the Council continues to work with potential investors to help them to bring their projects to fruition.

7. Incorporation of social value into our procurement frameworks and contracts

A software package has been procured to build social value into Council contracts. Work is on-going with procurement and contract management colleagues to build social value into current and future procurement exercises. A briefing session for

Members is planned for March.

8. Provision of employability support available to local residents

Support for residents is being provided via our employability team and is a workstream within the Council's Community Recovery Strategy. The team has received extra funding from Welsh Government in readiness for the increased numbers of individuals needing support.

9. Meeting our Community and Business Protection statutory and enforcement duties in relation to Covid 19

This is an area of significant and sustained demand for the Portfolio with teams from within the Community and Business Protection Service playing a key role in supporting the local response to COVID-19.

Particular pressure has been placed on Environmental Health to support schools, care homes, specific community outbreaks, and workplaces, where clusters of COVID-19 cases are identified, with the aim of preventing further transmission. Work programmes have had to be re-prioritised to meet current pressures and demands.

Licensing and Trading Standards continue to enforce the Health Protection Regulations. As lockdown is further eased the demands around compliance and enforcement are likely to increase. The challenge for the Service is to continue to support these additional pressures, whilst at the same time planning ahead for a resumption of their core duties. Managing the expectations of the public will be important.

10. Work with our regional and local partners to support victims of (Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence) VAWDASV

Flintshire is fully engaged with regional partners to address this important area of work. The regional VAWDASV Board has recently transitioned into the North Wales Vulnerability and Exploitation Board where FCC is represented by the Chief Officer, Social Services. We are the host of the regional VAWDASV team and work closely with the office of the Police and Crime commissioner to ensure that the regional strategy is aligned to the budget received from Welsh Government.

11. Reinstatement of officer site visits where appropriate

A risk assessment for officer site visits has been produced and is being applied in all cases. Greater reliance is being placed on information that may be available from other sources e.g. Google Maps, Streetview etc

For the regional minerals and waste service only outdoor site visits to monitor key quarrying sites which are giving rise to complaints are taking place from publically accessible land or land in the control of the quarry company. Covid risk assessments apply. No visits are taking place within residential curtilages.

Officer site visits were re-established for the Development Service but have been scaled back since December 2020 since the second lock-down. Officers are relying

on digital information, submitted plans and where required a safe, site inspections from a public distance. The Building Control Service is avoiding internal inspections where possible and maintaining all external inspections.

12. Recommencement of all grant funded capital projects

Works have re-commenced at Bailey Hill, Mold, Wepre Park and the Greenfield reservoirs.

13. Undertaking of Ash Dieback surveys

Taking advantage of quieter roads in lockdown, dashcam surveys of ash trees adjacent to the highway were completed. This enabled a high level overview of the disease so more detailed inspections can be prioritised. The detailed inspections of the priority areas are due to be completed this month to enable a winter work programme to be established. An initial report is scheduled to be delivered to this Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Following the completion of the survey and inspection of priority roads, a costed winter work programme has been developed to deal with Flintshire owned infected trees of the highest risk. A process has been developed to engage with landowners who own infected trees adjacent to the highway.

Works to remove infected ash trees which pose a risk to the highway have started, also the Countryside Rangers have been removing ash adjacent to paths in popular countryside sites. Landowners with infected ash trees adjacent to the highway which pose a risk have started to be contacted highlight the risk and their responsibilities.

14. Restoration of the Development Management function

The services of the Development Management function are in great demand and our ability to deliver those services was compromised by the direct and indirect impacts of Covid 19. A similar situation is reflected across all North Wales authorities.

From the period of September to December data shows the service was recovering and output from the first week of September met and exceeded normal levels. As the schools shut and Wales went into lock-down again the service has again experienced some capacity issues, but a full planning, enforcement and appeals service remains operational. The service is experiencing delays from responses from internal and external consultees which has an impact on delivering the service as the planning process can only travel at the speed of its slowest contributor.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	There are no specific resource implications from this report.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	None specific as this report is based on documented response and recovery work.
<b>4.00</b>	<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>
4.01	This report specifically covers emergency situation risk management.
<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	The full latest version of the risk register and set of risk mitigation actions for the Planning, Environment and Economy portfolio within the terms of reference of this Committee
<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	<b>Contact Officer:</b> Andrew Farrow <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 703201 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk">andrew.farrow@flintshire.gov.uk</a>