Agenda Item 9

Falkirk Council Recovery

Falkirk Council

Title: **Falkirk Council Recovery**

Meeting: **Emergency Executive**

Date: **25 June 2020**

Submitted By: **Chief Executive**

1.   Purpose of Report

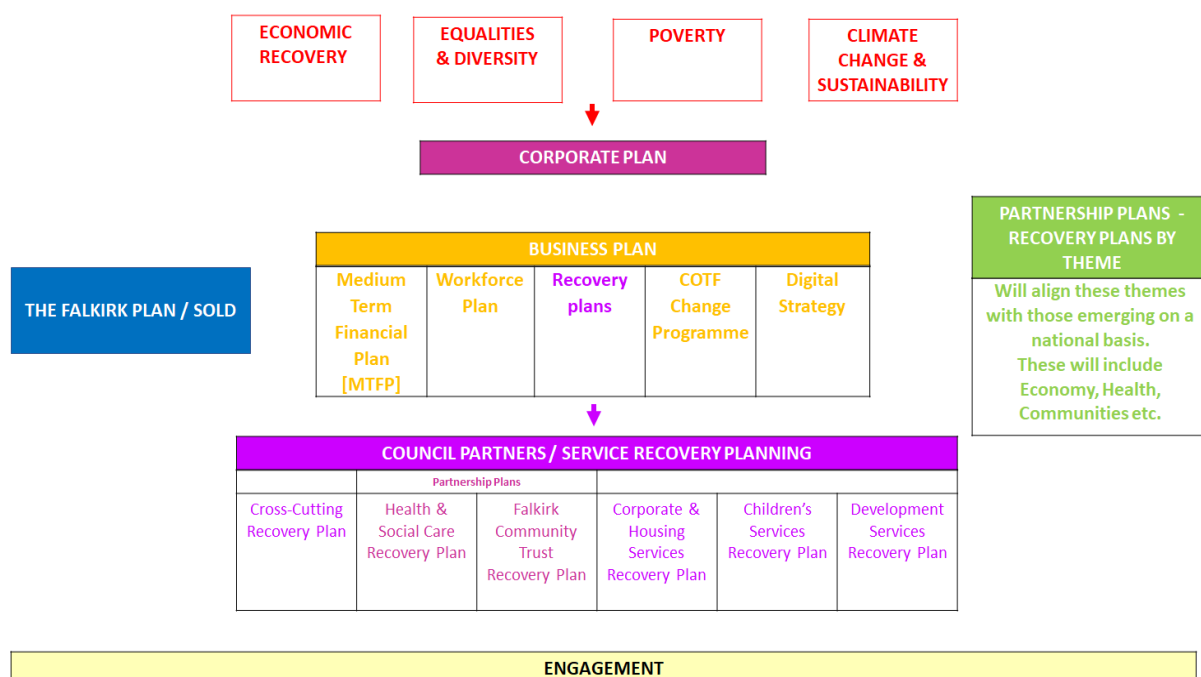The purpose of the report is to provide an overview of the Council's approach to recovery planning.

2.   Recommendation(s)

2.1   It is recommended that the Emergency Executive:
1) Endorses the Council's approach to recovery planning.
2) Notes that updates will be reported at future meetings.

3.   Background

3.1   On 11 June, the Emergency Executive agreed that the Council's recovery planning will form part of the Council's Five-Year Business Plan to link in with our approach to financial planning through the Medium Term Financial Plan, our Workforce Plan, our Council of the Future Change Programme and our Corporate Plan Actions.

3.2   This approach is founded in Council's current strategic plan framework, as previously presented to Members:

ECONOMIC RECOVERY	EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY	POVERTY	CLIMATE CHANGE & SUSTAINABILITY

CORPORATE PLAN

THE FALKIRK PLAN / SOLD

BUSINESS PLAN				
Medium Term Financial Plan [MTFP]	Workforce Plan	Recovery plans	COTF Change Programme	Digital Strategy

PARTNERSHIP PLANS - RECOVERY PLANS BY THEME

Will align these themes with those emerging on a national basis. These will include Economy, Health, Communities etc.

COUNCIL PARTNERS / SERVICE RECOVERY PLANNING					
Partnership Plans					
Cross-Cutting Recovery Plan	Health & Social Care Recovery Plan	Falkirk Community Trust Recovery Plan	Corporate & Housing Services Recovery Plan	Children's Services Recovery Plan	Development Services Recovery Plan

ENGAGEMENT

3.3   Overarching all of this will be Vision Framework that will provide a direction of travel for our recovery planning and set a framework for the Five-Year Business Plan and Corporate Plan, both of which will be reported in September. They will also inform the new Falkirk Plan with our Community Planning Partners which will be reported later in 2020/21.

3.4   Crucially, this approach will help us manage the recovery of the Council against the financial backcloth of the constrained resources we have now and going forward that will require clear decisions to be made on resource allocation.

4.   Considerations

4.1   Services have prepared recovery plans to resume service delivery as appropriate. The plans need to be considered in the context of the vision and priorities set out by Elected Members to ensure that:
- There is alignment with priorities to ensure best use of resources.
- Recovery actions reflect the learning from transformational operational practices adopted during lockdown.

4.2   The recovery plans are based on the Business Impact Assessment used as part of our Business Continuity Planning. A summary of the recovery plans is available in **appendix 1**:
- Overarching summary of recovery themes linked to Council priorities
- Corporate and Housing Services
- Development Services
- Children's Services – N.B. a separate report has been prepared for the Emergency Executive:
  Children's Services – Local Phased Education Delivery Plan (COVID-19 Recovery)

5.   Implications

Financial

5.1   The recovery plans should be considered in the context of the Council's strategic priorities and against the financial constraints.. There are limited resources and clear decision-making on how we use them is essential, prioritising for the most vulnerable in our communities and working with our communities. There is an item on the Emergency Executive agenda reporting on the Council's financial position

Resources

5.2   The revision of key council plans in the context of lessons learned from Covid-19 and the recovery process, will enable decision-making on how resources should be best used to deliver on agreed priorities.

Legal

5.3   There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Risk

5.4   If council plans are not considered against Council priorities, there is a risk that resource decisions will be made that will detriment the Council's progress in recovery.

Equalities

5.5   An Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) is not required for this report.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

5.6   An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required for this report.

6.   Conclusions

6.1   This report sets out council service recovery plans which aim to ensure the best use of resources in supporting communities and businesses in the recovery process.

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Chief Executive

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Date: 18 June 2020

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Summary of Service Recovery Plans

List of Background Papers:

- Corporate and Housing Recovery Plan
- Development Services Recovery Plan
- Children's Services Recovery Plan

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973:

Services - Summary of Recovery Plans

The bulleted list below provides a brief summary of the key points to the recovery approach being undertaken by Services, and the Health and Social Care Partnership. These have been aligned to the priorities within the Straw Man framework. Detailed explanations can be found in each of the appended recovery plans.

Common across all Plans
- Health and safety of customers, members and staff are at the forefront of recovery plans.
- Moving to a new norm of greater home working and use of digital technologies.
- Undertaking risk assessment for individual areas of service delivery and working within health and safety guidelines.

1.   People in our communities are supported to live their lives well

Service Delivery
- A tiered approach to front line service delivery will be introduced with telephone / video conferencing and face to face meetings by appointment.
- Opening hours for front line service delivery is likely to be reduced.
- A reintroduction of urgent repairs to Council houses and a phased approach to the delivery of refurbishment projects.
- Re-introduction of services tied to recovery phases e.g. registry office marriage ceremonies, print works and housing provision.
- Significant impact on available staffing levels to deliver direct visiting to vulnerable families.

Children in Care
- Available buildings to support families and staff to have contact with their children in care:
- Workforce on rota with a social distanced space available to them
- Requirement to update risk assessment re implication of lone home working
- Our IT availability generally to support home working capacity in service and use of video conferencing to support improved participation for young people and families
- PPE availability
- Some service areas cannot work from home and we need to recognise that.

2.   Enable everyone to fulfil their potential

Schools
- Risk assessments being undertaken to ensure a safe and managed return to schools.
- Implement blended learning arrangements for primary school pupils from 12 August. This will be supported with learning at home experiences.
- Secondary schools will implement an alternate blended learning arrangement with staged incremental increases in school days and pupil numbers.

3.   Help businesses to thrive & make Falkirk more prosperous

Transport
- Provision of sustainable transport will be aligned with transport industry proposals – discussion ongoing.
- Transport for school children will be prioritised for children who cannot be transported by a parent/carer.

4.   Work with our communities to make them healthier, safer and more sustainable

Health
- The Health and Social Care Partnership continues to provide essential front line services and planning aligned to Phase one of the recovery. Lessons learned from this approach will support service approach should a second wave occur.
- Moving forward the partnership has key priority actions which will accelerate integration, sustain new and effective integration models, redesign services, review the approach to the delivery of care support and assurance and build on local communities support for the pandemic.

Environment
- Re-establishing outdoor services such as grass maintenance, roads maintenance and street cleansing.

5.   An innovative & entrepreneurial council, providing effective leadership to help transform An innovative & entrepreneurial council, providing effective leadership to help transform

Technology
- Continuing deployment of technologies to provide greater opportunities for online and video collaboration.
- Technology will assist with reducing paper across the organisations.
- Digital channels will be used to support transactions of business.

Buildings

- A greater increase in mobile and flexible working practices will therefore reduce accommodation needs.
- Undertake prioritised risk assessments and agree reviewed building layouts to observe social distancing protocols. This work will be undertaken in line with proposals from the Anytime, Anywhere Council of the Future project.
- Organise Members Workshops to review the approach and principles of SPR, revisit recommendations and Executive approval.

Corporate and Housing Services
Recovery Plan Summary

Introduction

Our business recovery plan is based on the Business Impact Assessment we use as part of our Business Continuity Planning.

Our recovery out of the COVID emergency is mapped against the phases set out in the Scottish Government Route Map.

We have 85 individual business activities mapped against the Government's Route Map.

Our Recovery Plan covers the following Divisions within Corporate and Housing Services:

- Housing and Communities
- Housing Property and Procurement
- People, Technology and Transformation
- Finance
- Governance

Below is a summary of the key business activities which are expected to be restored at each phase of the Government Route Map together with some commentary on the channel shift anticipated as we recover into a transformed Service.

As a significant % of the employees within the Service are office based and working from home, there will be no changes to the working arrangements for these employees as even at stage 4 of the Scottish Government Route Map those who can work from home are still expected to be doing so.

Dependencies for our Recovery

It is worth reflecting that recovery at each stage is a complex matter and successful recovery is based on a number of dependencies. These have been grouped into the following headings:

- Workforce availability
- Premises
- PPE / equipment
- Other departments
- Contractors / suppliers
- Customer behaviour

Current Position

A significant number of our services are already up and running and have continued to be delivered in whole or in part during the COVID-19 emergency.

These include:

- Legal services
- Registration
- Revenues and Benefits
- Scottish Welfare Fund
- Corporate Finance
- Procurement
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Payroll and creditor payments
- Support for People
- Homeless assessments
- Emergency Repairs
- Gas servicing and maintenance
- Provision of additional temporary accommodation
- Void property work for priority homeseeker allocations

Following the commencement of Phase 1 of the Route Map, the following additional services are also now starting to be provided

- External repair works
- External fabric improvements, housing capital programme works and cyclical maintenance.

Recovery at Phase 2

At stage 2 of the Route Map the following additional services will be provided:

- Urgent repairs in occupied properties (subject to SG advice)
- Return to full void maintenance service
- Allocation of offers in the system to home movers and then home starters
- Marriage and civil partnerships within Registry Office
- Print Works

Recovery at Phase 3

At stage 3 of the Route Map the following additional services will be provided:

- Tiered approach to homeless assessments with face to face and video conferencing being added to the current telephone service.

- Potential for limited face to face contact with customers seeking advice through an appointments process. This would be added to the current telephone arrangements
- Buy back of Council houses to increase our housing supply
- Installation of replacement kitchens and bathrooms in occupied properties (subject to SG advice)
- Backlog of routine internal repairs and inspections (subject to SG advice)

Recovery at Phase 4

At stage 4 the following <u>additional services</u> will be provided:

- All services now being provided in "the new norm".

Channel Shift into a Transformed Service

The Service had a number of projects included in the Council's Change Programme. The experiences of the last few months with the COVID-19 emergency has provided the opportunity to accelerate these transformation initiatives.

As we progress our Recovery Plan the following are likely to characterise our service:

- There will be an increase in mobile and flexible working, thereby reducing the need for accommodation
- There will be a tiered approach to front line service delivery with telephone / video conferencing and face to face meetings by appointment.
- There will be a greater use of digital channels for business to be transacted
- There will be less use of paper and greater use of electronic data management
- There will be a potential increase use of external contractors to cover BMD employees who are shielding, self-isolating and to maintain service provision and cover backlog work

Development Services
Covid-19 Recovery Plan Summary

Introduction

Our Covid-19 business recovery plan is based on the Business Impact Assessment we use as part of our Business Continuity Planning.

Our recovery plan sets out the key actions on our route out of the emergency and identifies the main trigger milestones that will determine when we must take forward these actions.

This is approach reflects that restrictions are likely to be eased gradually as we move through the phases set out in the Scottish Government Route Map. We will continuously review our recovery plan as the situation develops and we reach each of the recovery milestones.

We have 77 individual areas of business activity identified in our plan.

Our Recovery Plan covers the following Divisions within Development Services:

- Design, Roads & Transport
- Environmental Services
- Planning & Economic Development

This summary report provides an overview of the key business activities currently being delivered and the key recovery milestones that will guide the restoration of our services impacted by the current situation together with some commentary on the channel shift anticipated as we recover into a transformed Service.

As a significant percentage of the employees within Development Services are office based and working from home, there will be no changes to the working arrangements for these employees until a return to office working is announced, as even at stage 4 of the Scottish Government Route Map, those who can work from home are still expected to be doing so.

Dependencies for our Recovery

It is worth noting that the recovery of each area of activity is a complex matter and will be entirely dependent on when the triggers set out are reached as we move through the Scottish Government Road Map. In addition, there are a number of shared dependencies across all areas of recovery, namely:

- Workforce availability
- Premises
- PPE / equipment
- Other departments / projects
- Contractors / suppliers
- Customer behaviour

Current Position

A significant number of our services are already up and running and have continued to be delivered in whole or in part during the COVID-19 emergency, particularly following the commencement of Phase 1 of the Scottish Government Route Map.

These include:

- Street Cleansing
- Transport Coordination
- Air Quality
- Food Business Support
- Fleet Management
- Vehicle Servicing and Repairs
- Class 4 and Class 7 MOT's
- Operator Licence Compliance
- Waste Collection
- Waste Processing
- Waste Strategy & Enforcement
- Strategic Property Review (SPR)
- Property Strategy & Implementation Plan
- Corporate Landlord Review

Recovery Milestones

The following recovery milestones have been identified which will guide when we will move to restore services:

- Return to Outdoor Working (including Construction Industry Redstart Timeline)
- Return to Indoor Working
- Sustained Reduction in Covid-19 related deaths
- Reopening of Schools
- Restoration of Public Transport Services
- Relaxation of Travel Restrictions
- Relaxation of Covid Response Duties
- Restoration of Capital Finance Team
- Reopening of MOT & Automotive Suppliers

Full details of the actions aligned to these milestones can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

Channel Shift into a Transformed Service

The Service has a number of projects included in the Council's Strategic Change Programme. The experiences of the last few months with the COVID-19 emergency has provided the opportunity to accelerate some of these transformation initiatives.

As we progress our Recovery Plan, the following are likely to characterise our service:

- There will be an increase in mobile and flexible working, thereby reducing the need for accommodation
- There will be an increase in the use of digital technologies
- There will be a tiered approach to front line service delivery with telephone / video conferencing and face to face meetings by appointment.
- There will be a greater use of digital channels for business to be transacted
- There will be less use of paper and greater use of electronic data management

<h1 align="center"><u>Children's Services
Recovery Plan Summary</u></h1>

EDUCATION

Establishment Recovery and Improvement Plans

It is our expectation that current SIP priorities will continue into next session. In Falkirk Council our main priorities for education recovery planning are; wellbeing, learning and teaching, assessment, and transitions.

These key areas are reflected in the recovery plan template (Appendix 1) provided for all establishments. The Service and School Improvement Team will engage with early learning centres and schools to support planning and recovery support needs throughout June and again in September. For this session we will not expect any kind of submission in June.

Standards and Quality Reports are still important but will have a different focus this session.

Priority Areas
<u>Learning at Home</u>

Using digital innovation and providing learning materials across ELCs and Schools to support learning at home.

<u>Transitions</u>

Key transition stages are:
- moving from the ELC sector to primary school.
- moving from primary to secondary school.
- moving from mainstream to specialist provision

At this time, we recognise the impact of the experience of lockdown on individuals' emotional, educational, financial and social capital.
We will ensure timely yet accurate communication with parents/carers about the plan for each phase of the transition: Term 4 and return to the new session. Parents/Carers should be helped to understand that ongoing transition-type activities will form an important part of the new curriculum. Communication should be delivered in a range of ways, both digital and non-digital, to ensure everyone receives and understands it.

<u>Resources</u>

Individual core resource packs are - and will continue to be produced for children and young people.

Managing learning spaces and resources safely remains a priority capacity Assessment.

Reopening of ELCCs and Schools

- Working and Learning Safely remains a priority.
- Safe Return of Children and Young People.

Proposed Models for Reopening

Primary schools are planning for an aspiration al return of 50% cohorts in a 2/1/2 blended model if in school/ in home learning:

- **Cohort 1:** in-school learning Monday/ Tuesday, in home learning Thursday Friday
- **Wednesdays:** planning in school and in home learning, reorganisation, preparation and cleaning of learning spaces and resources as appropriate.
- **Cohort 2:** in-school learning Thursday/ Friday, in home learning Monday/ Tuesday

Secondary schools require more individualised models to meet the needs of their pupils.

Our secondary headteachers worked collaboratively to design a model that has core consistencies but allows for flexibility. Their proposal takes into account the following:

- Current guidance from Scottish Government with regards to returning to school.
- Current guidance from Scottish Government with regards to Public Health.
- Local measures to ensure safe return to in school learning and teaching.

Additional Support Needs

- **Secondary Additional Support Centres:** (Grangemouth HS, Larbert HS and Denny HS) are being managed in line with the mainstream school arrangements.
- Carrongrange High School, Kinnaird Wing and Annex, Timezone, Easter Carmuirs PS ASC and Ladeside PS ASC.
- In keeping with mainstream modelling, ASN settings are striving to allow the return of all pupils back to education over the course of a calendar week. This will be in the form of 50% attending Monday/Tuesday and 50% attending Thursday/Friday with planning and preparation for and digital in home learning and cleaning on Wednesday.

Blended Learning

- Blended Learning Using Digital Technology
- Planning Ahead: Outdoor Learning Guidance

Consultation

Since the beginning of lockdown, we have worked closely with our heads of establishment, particularly Early Years and Primary and Secondary Improvement Partnership representatives. This has ensured a sense of collective endeavour – which will continue – to help us to plan forward based on reliable information and intelligence.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Children in Care
- Available buildings to support families and staff to have contact with their children in care:
- Workforce on rota with a social distanced space available to them
- Requirement to update risk assessment re implication of lone home working
- Our IT availability generally to support home working capacity in service and use of video conferencing to support improved participation for young people and families
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