

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest is a shield divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a sailing ship on the water. The top-right quadrant shows a stag's head with antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a beaver. The bottom-right quadrant shows a grizzly bear. Above the shield is a crown with four maple leaves. Below the shield is a banner with the motto "A NE FOR A".

## **Agenda Item 3**

# **Coronavirus Update**

**Falkirk Council**

**Title:**                    **Coronavirus Update**  
**Meeting:**               **Emergency Executive**  
**Date:**                   **14 May 2020**  
**Submitted By:**       **Chief Executive**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 All councillors will be very aware of the global and national impact of COVID-19. Since Members were last addressed on this in a formal setting (at the meeting of full council on 9 March) our lives have changed to an extraordinary degree. Very few areas of the world lie untouched by the impacts of COVID-19 and our efforts to prevent it from fulfilling its destructive capability. At the time of writing the UK has 194,990 lab confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 29,427 associated deaths. The corresponding numbers for Scotland are 12,709 and 1,703 whilst in the Forth Valley area we have 802 confirmed cases and 156 people who have lost their lives. Again, at the time of writing we remain, in the UK, in what has become known as “lockdown”. The Council was and is also significantly affected and a number of measures were taken before and during the timeline described below. Members have been provided with relevant information on a regular basis throughout but these measures are summarised in this report together with information on how we might proceed from here.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Members:-**

- **note the terms of this report and support the approach outlined moving forward**

**3. Background**

3.1 A timeline of UK intervention events is shown below:-

3 March	Stage 1 intervention : UK introduces phase 1 of the plan to address Coronavirus “delay” measures
12 March	Stage 2 intervention: move from delay to “containment “ phase 2
16 March	Stage 3 interventions: self isolation, restrictions on social activities and advice to vulnerable people.
18 March	Stage 4 interventions: schools and colleges close as of 20 March

20 March	Stage 5 interventions: further social distancing measures relating to leisure , businesses and cultural facilities
23 March	Stage 6 interventions: complete social distancing, restrictions on travel, household isolation. The start of the 'Stay Home Save Lives' approach.
16 April	Stage 6 interventions extended for a further period of at least three weeks
7 May	Interventions fall to be reviewed

#### 4. Resilience partnership plans and structures

- 4.1 How public agencies require to plan for and react during an emergency is described in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and regulations flowing from this legislation. Certain public bodies are categorised in the Act as either Category 1 or Category 2 responders. Local Authorities, along with Health Boards and the Emergency Services are included in Category 1. The relevant responders in Scotland are grouped into three geographically based partnerships and Falkirk Council is a member of the East of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (EoSRRP). This is largely a planning group and does not generally “stand up” in an emergency. The EoSRRP has met during this crisis but, the relevant work is largely being done at a more local level, in our case in the Forth Valley Local Resilience Partnership (FVLRP), and at a national level. The RRP has determined not to add unnecessarily to the administrative burden on responders and has stood down meantime. The FVLRP meets on a weekly basis, with senior representation from all relevant agencies. The current work of this group is managed via a series of sub groups and more information on them is included in para 4.4 below.
- 4.3 On a national basis, the Multi Agency Co-ordination Centre (MACC) stood up early on in this incident. The MACC’s senior officer cohort comprises the Strategic Co-ordinating Group which has representation from all relevant Cat 1 and 2 responders. Local Authorities are represented on the SCG by the Chief Executive of Dumfries and Galloway Council. This strategic group is supported by a number of thematic subgroups dealing variously with support for people, death management, PPE, testing and recovery. The SCG meets twice per week and receives reports from LRPs on these topics via the various sub group leads.
- 4.4 The key areas where the Council has been contributing to the partnership co-ordinated effort are:-
- a. **Care for people**, including supporting those who are shielded. The very strong partnerships we have with the voluntary sector proved to be invaluable in this work. The Support for People Team, in partnership with other agencies, seeks to ensure support is provided to the most vulnerable (people with compromised immune systems), who will be shielded through self-isolation during the COVID-19 challenge. This service has been set up in response to the request from Scottish Government to set up Humanitarian Assistance Centres. There are c 5,600 people within the Council area who have been advised to “shield” by the NHS. The service

goes further than just providing support to the most vulnerable and seeks to provide support across our communities to those who need it most. Priority is given to those identified by the Health Service as the most vulnerable. Support includes provision of food, medicines and basic supplies/services. Since the service launched on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020, there have been 2993 contacts made with the team. This includes 515 calls which have been redirected from the National Helpline. 1806 people received advice at the time and did not require further support. 1187 people required support, some for more than one service. Support has been provided through a “triage” service involving the voluntary sector, Forth Valley Health Board as well as various Council Services. For those who have received shielding letters from the NHS, approximately 1,600 have signed up to receive weekly food boxes. CLD staff are supporting Falkirk CVS with their wider Food Initiative Project. Food is collected at 3 central sites for packing and transporting to 13 local distribution sites run by local volunteer groups. As demand increases it is expected that requests for this service will grow to over 800 per week shortly.

- b. **Transport**, primarily to support NHS to allow movement of goods and people, including patients, around our area.
- c. **Death management**, to ensure that proper resources are in place and the relevant processes run as smoothly as possible always having regard to the dignity of the deceased and the feelings of the bereaved. Working originally to pandemic flu planning death modelling, figures suggested that the bereavement process would be placed under significant strain. Our reasonable worst case scenario assumptions led us to expect a requirement for a substantial increase in cremation and burial capacity. Additional temporary mortuary capacity was sourced. Thankfully, the projections provided to be particularly pessimistic and, with careful management on a Forth Valley basis, the processes are operating well. Restriction of the number of mourners allowed at funerals has caused an inevitable degree of distress but this has been handled sensitively. The contribution of our partners in the Funeral Director sector cannot be overstated in this regard. The situation is expected to remain stable but is being closely monitored.
- d. **Testing**, to support partners in establishing and, where required, operating elements of the centres. The full expectation of local authorities in this regard is not yet known. The HSCP has a process in place to give staff, including external providers, care homes and personal assistants access to testing following a decision matrix and prioritisation process with NHS FV Public Health team.
- e. **Business support** - Since 7<sup>th</sup> April almost £17m has been paid out to 1,500 local businesses through the various iterations of Scottish Government funding for businesses. Payment has been made to all within 10 working days, with exception of small number of businesses who were not correctly registered for rates as at 17<sup>th</sup> March. This has been a good example of innovation and collaborative working across services and the teams involved have responded positively to the fluid position, and will continue to do so,
- f. **PPE**, the PPE Co-ordination Group has met weekly since the end of March. The meeting is attended by key stakeholders representing care services, non-care services and corporate functions including health and safety and procurement. Over the last few weeks, arrangements for

ordering and distributing PPE have changed frequently to respond to revised national guidance and supply arrangements. The Scottish Government announced on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020 changes to the NSS triage service for care registered services. HSCP Hubs are now the primary model for distribution of PPE supplies to the whole social care sector and the Hubs extend provision to include unpaid/family carers and personal assistants. This change was effective from 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and significantly changes the previous operating arrangements. A revised Hub model has now been established, with one main store replacing the previous 3 local HSCP Hubs. Changes are effectively communicated to care homes and all relevant services. We are working with our Trade Unions and all relevant individuals and groups to alleviate understandable concerns and anxieties people have. Advice for staff, carers and volunteers who require PPE is updated and revised to reflect current guidance; accessible information briefings are available on the Council web pages. A special mailbox has been set up by social work adult services to respond to enquiries and advice is provided quickly. Services, groups, volunteers and individuals providing care for people at home are supported to understand what PPE they need to keep them and others safe and provided with it if unable to access their own supplies. As time progresses, confidence in supply and provision for PPE for people who need it is growing but it is important to keep sharp focus on this issue.

- g. **Recovery**, developing a partnership approach to getting back to the new normal as soon as is appropriate. This is covered in more detail later in the report.
- h. **Communications**, to ensure that accurate and relevant information and advice is provided in a timely fashion throughout.

## **5. Key Council Services including the Falkirk Health and Care Partnership and Falkirk Community Trust**

- 5.1 Members will be aware that the Council has robust systems in place for monitoring and managing risk and planning for the impact of risk to be mitigated. As part of this preparation we have a number of detailed business continuity plans (BCP'S) which are exercised and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are fit for purpose. The most recent Resilience Preparedness Assessment, prepared for the RRP mentioned above, identified a pandemic influenza as the highest risk facing partners. Accordingly, our preparations were planned in this context. As advised to Members on 9 March, this planning work formed the foundation of the actions we took in preparation for "lockdown" and beyond.
- 5.2 It was apparent, given the speed and extent of the interventions described above, that the Council would have to move quickly to delivery of core services only. This was completed swiftly and, although not without practical challenges caused mainly by the speed at which things had to be done, for the most part effectively. As might have been expected, communications at times struggled to keep up with the breakneck speed at which we were operating but our communities, for the most part, recognised the difficulties we faced and were understanding.

### 5.3 In summary the steps taken in this context are described below

#### a. **Children's Services**

##### **Hubs**

Children's Services established childcare Hubs across each of the 7 catchment areas to provide childcare including specialist provision, for essential workers and for children, from our most vulnerable families, attendance by vulnerable children improving steadily. Catering Services have been distributing Grab n Go lunch bags to children who need them. Over 2,500 meal bags are currently being issued daily from over 30 distribution sites.

Schools are using online platforms to support digital learning, mainly through Glow, to set activities for pupils. Connectivity guides have been provided to support pupils and parents accessing the resources. The Service has also created a Connected Falkirk site to support all staff (teaching and non-teaching staff), with digital learning and improved the distance learning resources. Additional resources have been purchased for our online eBook and Audiobook service, BorrowBox. Schools have been using their social media platforms to share learning ideas and provide support to families, with daily themed activities being set.

Around 150 essential staff have been recruited, using virtual ICT platforms, in time for the start of the new term.

Children's Services has identified vulnerable children as those at risk of significant harm, Looked after children and those children with complex needs or on the edges of care. An offer of school hub provision to our most vulnerable has been made to all children and families who have been identified in this group and our uptake of provision has continued to increase. Significant efforts have been made to contact families who have children to help encourage and support them attend the hubs that have been established. This has had a positive effect as the numbers of children engaging with the hubs has increased initially from around 10 to 60 currently. We aim to broaden our approach to families in need of support going forward, where school closures continue with an anticipated rise in families facing additional pressures which is likely to impact on children and young people's safety and wellbeing.

Children and Families Social Work continue to deliver critical front-line services to the most vulnerable children including those Looked After and children on the Child Protection Register. Keeping children safe and providing a child protection service remains our priority and we continue to respond to referrals of concern about children. We are working in partnership with key stakeholders including education, health and the police to share information and jointly assess risk to children. Children's rights are always of paramount importance and we continue to do all we can to maintain them. We are promoting parents, children and young people's participation in assessments and multi-agency planning and review forums through face to face contact, telephone calls, seeking written views and video calling to ensure their voices are heard and they

are able to meaningfully contribute to assessments, planning and decision making. Support for care experienced children and other vulnerable families is ongoing and responsive to emerging needs stemming from the pandemic.

We are investigating child concerns without delay and providing intervention and family support to those assessed to be at highest risk and those most in need. Multi agency conferences and reviews are being prioritised for the most vulnerable and at risk children and young people. Meetings are taking place via conference call systems and they require to be held in stages to ensure children, families and carers are involved whilst being appropriately supported. The Child Protection Committee continues to meet to provide assurance to the Public Protection Chief Officers group (PPCOG). During the response to the pandemic, the PPCOG met as a Forth Valley group for the first time. This approach provided an opportunity to focus on high risk areas and to provide collective leadership across all services and partners who have public protection responsibilities.

Justice Social Work Services are maintaining telephone or face to face contact with service users, depending on their need and risk assessment. Unpaid work has been suspended for the time being but our supervisors are providing community support by supporting food distribution to food banks. Public protection and risk management decisions remain at the heart of everything the service does and work is ongoing with partners to be as effective as possible despite the current challenges

**b. Falkirk Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)**

In recent weeks the HSCP has redeployed staff across our services to maintain care in our care homes and care at home. The day care services stopped due to social distancing but the teams are in contact with families and continue to provide support.

We have invested in additional capacity to temporarily block book care home beds and care at home packages with independent providers to help sustain care (this will be kept under review as the situation evolves). However as with other sectors, there is a limited supply of available trained staff. We are working with council colleagues to train other council workers who have volunteered to augment our care workforce and likewise with NHS Forth Valley.

The HSCP has increased our 24/7 staffing in MECS service to extend care at home and have invested in increasing the supply of equipment.

The situation is very fluid, and the approach so far has enabled us to keep the services safe and to respond to emerging urgent need to support independent care providers and unpaid carers through our work with the carers centre. In the last fortnight we have been able to provide significant staffing support from our integrated teams to support Independent care homes that have had significant staff absence and levels of COVID in residents.

At the HSCP mobilisation team we are in contact with all services and care homes on a daily basis to ensure they are safe and to provide support through mutual aid if required. Our local teams continue to deliver care and are in contact with families. We are working with partners to sustain community health and care services and to have the capacity to step in where required by other services to continue caring for Falkirk citizens and supporting our staff.

#### Drug and Alcohol Services

The Social Inclusion Project (SIP) project will be work very closely with Community Alcohol and Drug Service (CADS) / CGL (Change Live Grow - new addiction support service) to provide additional support to those in need, particularly with medicines etc. for those on opioid replacement therapy (ORT).

The extended Harm Reduction Service has been approved (on a temporary basis) to distribute Injecting Equipment Provision (IEP), this is an additional back up for Falkirk. We will use their mobile vehicle too, to reach the rural outlying villages.

CADS and CGL are working together to ensure that there is a package of support for those who are ill and cannot pick up.

The CGL Harm Reduction Service is also prepared to seek and find those who are in need and provide necessary injecting equipment. They will still accept new clients but will operate more of a Harm Reduction model. This will mean services can identify those people most at risk (out of treatment) and try to keep them safe with Naloxone, signposting people to the foodbank etc.

Forth Valley Recovery Community has made themselves available to all of the services

### **c. Corporate and Housing Services**

Our HR team developed a comprehensive range of Frequently Asked Questions and guidance for employees and managers including on the appropriate use of PPE. Good support systems for employee wellbeing, including a new counselling service, have been strengthened. Payroll and our contact centres were operated remotely. Our 24/7 service continued to operate adhering to social distancing rules. Regular and frequent engagement with our Trade Unions proved invaluable. Video and teleconferencing set up and maintenance of our IT systems was and continues to be a key task. Our local office support staff supported some of our front line services.

Our housing allocation scheme was suspended and our housing repair service restricted to essential functions such as emergency repairs, void maintenance and gas maintenance which continued adhering to social distancing rules.



#### **d. Development Services**

Waste Services were reduced back to core services to ensure that householders would have a residual and food waste collection. The other waste collection streams are now being re-established as resources and guidance allows. Our Household Waste Recycling centres prepare to reopen when the others in Scotland do. The Bereavement Service was temporarily augmented by colleagues from other parts of Development Services to create additional capacity. Graveside and crematorium services continue, observing government guidance, with capacity for additional cremation services to be added to the timetable if required. The Resilience Team have operated well throughout, co-ordinating and leading on much of the partnership work described above.

#### **e. Falkirk Community Trust**

On 27 April 2020 the FCT Board took the formal decision to furlough almost 90% of its workforce to enable it to access the Coronavirus Job Retention Fund. Staff were notified on 4 May 2020 and arrangements are being put in place to make a submission for a claim of 80% of eligible wages per employee up to £2500 per month per employee from 20 March 2020. This action is vital to the ongoing financial viability of the Trust and minimises the financial risk to the Council if the Trust had not participated in the scheme. Most Trust staff will be paid 100% of their standard wage. The scheme regulations limit the Trust ability to directly support volunteering via the Council and so staff are now being encouraged to continue with the community via CVS Falkirk and Ready for Scotland.

### **6. Business as Usual**

- 6.1 One of the great successes in managing the impacts of this incident, is the ease with which mass home working has been effectively and swiftly rolled out across all appropriate areas of the council. Procurement of additional stocks of laptops and mobiles was accelerated, with laptops being quickly configured and delivered to staff working from home to add to the ability for employees to use their own devices. Teleconferencing and video conferencing has been used extensively, with work Whatsapp groups springing up to allow teams to keep in touch on non-confidential issues and work to continue, including regular team and management meetings. Many of our other stakeholders in the work we do were also working remotely and contact could continue accordingly. Staff were able to come into offices, on a scheduled basis, to collect screens, keyboards and even chairs where appropriate to allow them to work more comfortably and efficiently in a home environment.
- 6.2 As a consequence, a great deal of work has continued largely uninterrupted. Within Development Services, for instance, we continue to receive, process and determine planning and building warrant applications, with arrangements for a remote Planning Committee in hand.

- 6.3 These contributions will stand us in good stead when we endeavour to return to the new normal as referred to below. We continue to pay employees, grade posts, provide an employee and ICT helpdesk, provide an active contact centre and, in particular, our 24/7 emergency call lines. We have also maintained good connectivity through our IT systems through this period. Our Scottish Welfare Fund team have operated remotely during this period and successfully delivered this service to those in need. As has our homeless service, providing assessment and accommodation where required.
- 6.4 In addition, a number of colleagues who have been unable to work from home have been redeployed e.g. to support the bulky uplift service and to support food parcel delivery. We are currently seeking support from those who volunteered for our social care services and/or have volunteered to support services provided by voluntary organisations
- 6.5 All core service and business as usual activity was risk assessed to ensure compliance with government guidance and full consultation with Trades Unions undertaken.

## **7. Next Steps**

- 7.1 Work will continue on specific response activities, primarily those described above in paragraph 5.3. Continuing support for those in our communities who have been made vulnerable, or more vulnerable, by the outbreak will be critical to support their wellbeing and, as far as possible, keep them safe from the virus and its effects. The voluntary sector contribution, together with that flowing from community activation generally has been little short of phenomenal. Strong existing partnerships allowed this response category to be effectively organised and activated early in the intervention programme. The elements of the support for people work, together with most other partnership initiatives, continue to be regularly monitored to ensure processes are robust and outcomes secured. We, along with other Cat 1 responders, require frequently to report into the MACC to ensure that a national overview can be maintained and mutual aid requirements identified and met, should there be any. Finally, new response areas of activity will emerge and be absorbed into the existing structures. Two current areas ongoing relate to testing and mass vaccination.

## **8. Recovery**

- 8.1 Good practice guidance in dealing with any emergency dictates that the issue of restoration of the proper order of things starts to be addressed early on in any crisis. This ensures that decisions aren't taken during the response phase that could cause unnecessary problems when endeavouring to effect recovery. It also reflects the fact that, in many cases, the recovery from the event will be more complex, expensive and take much more time than the event itself. Depending on the event, recovery can take years and, even then, normal can be somewhat distant from what it was before. This is known as the "new normal". These are circumstances we are likely to face post COVID.

- 8.2 As stated above, the SCG now has a recovery subgroup. This group is chaired by the Chief Executive of the City of Glasgow Council and is finalising its terms of reference, membership and work programme. There is a strong local authority presence amongst the membership of this group, as is to be expected given the recovery element in civil contingencies integrated emergency planning is usually led by the relevant council or councils. As we move away from response and into full time recovery, this subgroup will become the SCG. The focus and roles and responsibilities will shift but the membership of the SCG will largely remain the same.
- 8.3 Recovery, in the case of a worldwide pandemic, has far wider reach than a civil contingency context. The recovery plan will involve all areas of UK and Scottish Government and is likely to extend into every aspect of our lives. It will be critically important to ensure that the two areas of activity, recovery (in its accepted civil resilience sense) and what is currently being referred to as renewal (having wider and deeper policy reach), are sufficiently well scoped, connected yet clearly defined to be able to effect as successful an outcome as possible. This work continues to be shaped at a national level and will clearly influence the approach that the Council and its partners take to the relevant areas of activity such as the economy, welfare, health and communities. Relevant partnership groups already exist to form the basis of work going forward and the Community Planning Partnership will have a key role in its delivery and oversight.

In this regard it is intended that recovery plans are prepared to address themes including the following:

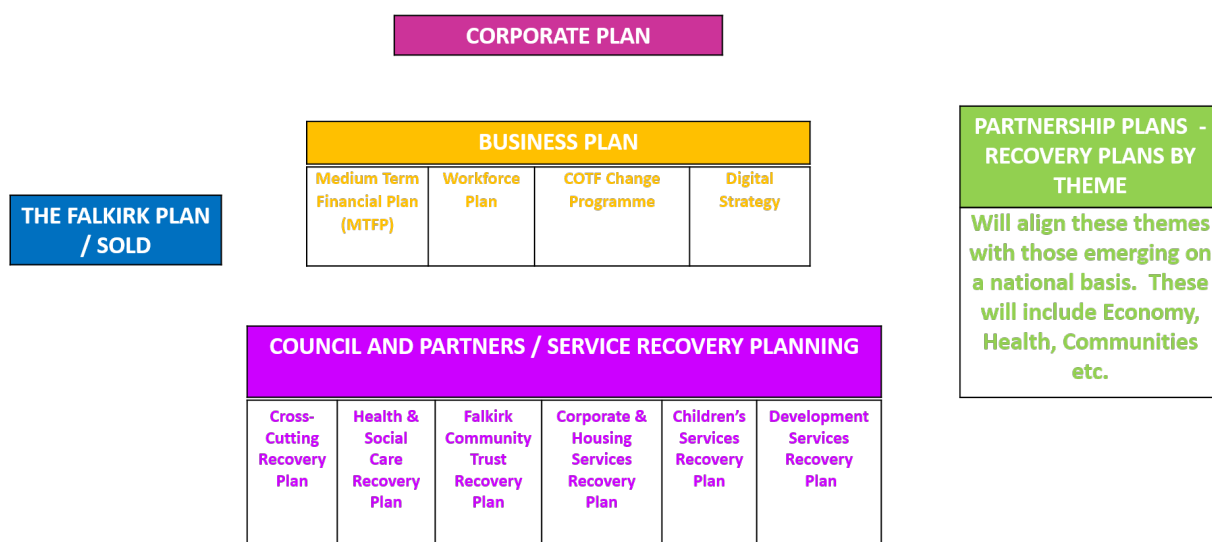
- The Falkirk Economic Partnership will work to develop an economic recovery plan, addressing the impact of COVID-19 for business, workforces and the wider community. It is important to recognise the scale of potential impact for the economy. The Scottish Government's Chief Economist has suggested that Scotland's GDP could reduce by 33% during the period of social distancing. Significant steps are likely to be necessary to enable business to adjust to the new economic landscape, adopting social distancing in their operations. The Economic Partnership will work to mitigate the effects for the Falkirk economy, including its most vulnerable businesses, sectors and communities. It will also look to build capacity for renewal and growth building on work undertaken to date via the Falkirk Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) initiative and the plans for the Investment Zone, presently being negotiated with UK and Scottish Governments. The latter will require to reconsider the components that make up the proposition to reflect the potential for revised priorities post COVID
- The health sector will face significant challenges in its ability to bring all services back up and running as it endeavours to operate full COVID and non-COVID services at the same time. The efforts of the acute part of the sector to both prepare for and manage the crisis has been quite remarkable but those services still operating are extremely stretched by the high pressure environment within which they operate. It can be expected that demand for community based health and care services will

continue to be high and the mental health impacts of an extended crisis are yet to be fully understood.

- All the above will have a significant impact on our communities. They are generally likely to be poorer and less healthy, albeit hopefully only in the short to medium term. Notwithstanding this, the benefits of the community response to this emergency will hopefully, be felt for the long term.

8.4 Internally, officers are currently working to the draft schematic shown below with the partnership recovery work described above also flagged.

#### Falkirk COVID-19 Recovery Planning 2020



In addition, an interim debrief exercise is being undertaken to ensure that lessons learned are identified, captured and integrated into the recovery plans as well as informing the work we will do on reviewing our business continuity and overall emergency response plans once we are fully into recovery mode.

8.5 Each council Service, together with the Health and Social Care Partnership and Falkirk Community Trust are working on their respective service recovery plans. These will be pulled together as an overarching Council recovery plan. Finalisation and execution of the plan and its elements will be heavily dependent on emerging government guidance on social distancing and essential travel but the plans are flexible and recognise that a lot of the decisions will not be entirely our own. Clear benefits that have been seen during lockdown e.g. the effectiveness of managed homeworking and reduction in business travel require to be captured in these recovery plans and inform work we do in planning for the future, particularly in relation to the Anytime Anywhere work and the Strategic Property Review. The excellence and effectiveness of joint working with CVS, the voluntary sector and communities across Falkirk, together with learning about what can be done better will inform the Enabled Communities Council of the Future project. This is the case not just for service recovery plans but for the council's whole approach to recovery when having

regard to reshaping our council of the future. In short, we need to build back better.

- 8.6 The level above on the schematic describes corporate activity that requires to be reconsidered in the light of the pandemic. Work is being done to review and refresh the Corporate Plan. The Business Plan is also being reviewed. Both of these documents will take account of the work done to address the COVID-19 situation, and the recovery work that is now required. To support this, Services have been asked to review their saving plans to meet the requirements of our MTFP. Council of the Future project managers have also been asked to identify the key actions required, to get their projects back on track, and what resource, if any, is required to do this focussing on the priority projects.

Four key risks to our MTFP have been identified at this time.

- The Scottish Government do not cover Council lost income / additional expenditure arising from the emergency
- The bid to funding to cover furloughed Trust employees is unsuccessful
- The IJB funding claim including savings of £2.8m is unsuccessful; increasing the financial burden on the Council, and finally
- Planned savings for the 20/21 budget agreed by Members in February are not deliverable due to business interruption from COVID-19 leaving the Council with expenditure it had not budgeted for.

Our workforce plans will require to be refreshed as part of our recovery plan. We have learned a great deal from the COVID-19 situation about different ways to deliver our services and this now needs to be reflected in our workforce plans. We will shortly be consulting on shortly an implementation plan for our Digital Strategy with a view to submitting this to Members thereafter for agreement. This work will proceed at pace and be informed by the learning from the current situation.

- 8.7 Once complete, the outcome of these reviews will be presented to Members for consideration.

## **9. Conclusion**

- 9.1 The Coronavirus pandemic has presented the Council, its partners, stakeholders and communities with a challenge that would have been considered unthinkable six months ago. It is generally accepted that the public sector has responded well and quickly to the difficulties it faced. Communities have stepped forward to look after their own, volunteering in large numbers and largely doing what has been asked of us in relation to keeping ourselves and others safe. As we now consider a tentative return to more normal lives and activities, much work will need to be done to restart the engine of state. This will require to minimise the damage caused by Coronavirus and the steps taken to curb it, whilst ensuring that our new normal captures the opportunities to create a better future building on our learning from this experience. In all of this, it is important that we reflect on the grief, concern, hardship and disruption that has affected the wellbeing of our communities and our employees as we plan for the future.

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Chief Executive

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**List of Background Papers**

None