

The background of the slide features the coat of arms of the Government of Nunavut. It is a shield-shaped emblem with a crown on top. The crown has four points, each with a stylized flower. The shield is divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a stylized building. The top-right quadrant shows a caribou head with large antlers. The bottom-left quadrant shows a sailing ship on wavy lines representing water. The bottom-right quadrant shows a stylized eagle with spread wings. A banner at the bottom of the shield contains the text "ANE FOR A'".

## **Agenda Item 5**

# **Economic Recovery Plan Update**

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Title: Economic Recovery Plan Update**

**Meeting: Emergency Executive**

**Date: 17 September 2020**

**Submitted By: Acting Director of Development Services**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present information on the economic impact and outcome of consultation concerning the Covid-19 situation and to seek agreement on the finalised version of the economic recovery plan presented at Emergency Executive in June 2020.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Emergency Executive:**

- a) notes the report on the economic impact and outcome of consultation on the Covid-19 situation (Appendix 1), and
- b) agrees the finalised version of the Covid-19 economic recovery plan 2020-22 (Appendix 2).
- c) agrees that an approach be made to Business Loans Scotland, requesting the withdrawal of £232,132 of funds to support the emergency business support measures noted in the recovery plan with details of these being brought forward to Members for approval
- d) agrees that the requirement for additional resources to support delivery of the plan be determined by the Council in its consideration of its capital and revenue budget reports at the meeting on 30 September.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The Emergency Executive received updates in June and August 2020 on the work relating to the Investment Zone for the Falkirk and Grangemouth area and on work being undertaken with partners to develop an economic recovery plan to address the anticipated impact of Covid-19 on the area's economy. The report in August conveyed summary details of consultations that had taken place over the summer on the draft economic recovery plan including a business survey and a series of sector focused workshops.

- 3.2 The impact of Covid-19 on the national and local economy continues to be experienced and further effects can be anticipated as the consequences of the virus are experienced across all parts of the economy. Actions in response have been triggered by UK and Scottish Governments and measures are being implemented by partners locally to ensure that businesses and the area's workforces are able to take advantage of the support on offer. Both tiers of government emphasise their intention to 'build back better' post the pandemic with measures being promoted to ensure a more sustainable and inclusive recovery.
- 3.3 Work to finalise the economic recovery plan for the Falkirk economy has now been completed and this report conveys details of the measures being suggested that the Council and its partners, via the Falkirk Economic Partnership will progress to manage the impact of Covid-19 on the area's economy.
- 3.4 As reported to Emergency Executive, this work aligns fully with steps being taken to finalise the content of the Investment Zone package of measures which are to be concluded through an agreement with UK and Scottish Government and will enable investment in significant infrastructure and related works to help transform the area's economy.

#### **4. Considerations**

- 4.1. The Covid-19 situation reinforces the need for measures to be taken to ensure an effective economic recovery. The attached report (Appendix 1) captures details of the economic impact of the pandemic on the UK, Scotland and the Falkirk area economy. It highlights that these impacts have been severe:
- in the UK, GDP fell by 20.4% in the month of April 2020, the largest fall since monthly records began in 1997
  - In Scotland, GDP remains 22.1% below its level in February, prior to lockdown measures
  - KPMG suggest that the GVA of the Falkirk economy (presently c£3500m p.a.) dropped by -5.8% in 2020.
  - The British Retail Consortium estimate that retail footfall fell by 53.4% year-on-year.
  - Since the start of COVID-19, the area has seen Universal Credit claimants rise to more than 11,000 with a rise of 66.6% in unemployment claimants between March and April 2020
  - Youth unemployment figures increased in the Falkirk area from 655(5.35%) in March 2020 to 1,250 in June 2020 (10.1%).
- 4.2 During the period since the commencement of the pandemic several companies, including Alexander Dennis Ltd, Marshalls and Campbell's Prime Meat have announced redundancies and owners of town centre properties have noted significant trading difficulties, including the prospect of closure of Callendar Square shopping centre.

4.3 The approach towards addressing the impact locally follows that of national government's 4 main themes: *Respond;Reset;Restart;Recover*. Measures have been applied in recent months to progress and finalise these actions and considerable efforts have taken place as follows:

- ***Respond***: measures to mitigate the impacts for business and workforces including the provision of information and grant support
- ***Reset***: support, planning and preparation for the economy to restart, including measures to ensure protection of the public
- ***Restart***: support and guidance for safe re-opening of business and measures which enable new methods of trading and operating

4.4 While many of these activities are being maintained during the lockdown period, it is important to move forward to the recovery stage. At UK level, a Plan for Jobs 2020 has been launched with a number of measures including .

- *Job Retention Bonus*: offering employers £1,000 for each employee they have furloughed and retain in employment to end January 2021
- *Kickstart scheme*: a £2 billion scheme for those aged 16-24 on universal credit and at risk of long-term unemployment, offering six-month work placements

It is important to acknowledge the scale of pressure facing the national economy. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecasts UK unemployment to peak at 3.5 million in 2021 and therefore further measures are anticipated in the Chancellor's budget statement later in September. There is also a potential risk of no deal being agreed in the EU/UK Brexit negotiations which could add to the adverse impact on the economy being experienced from Covid-19.

4.5 The Scottish Government recently published its Programme for Government and outlined several measures intended to assist with economic recovery. A strong theme of the programme is to achieve a sustainable and inclusive recovery with a set of measures announced including:

- A 'Youth Guarantee' scheme giving young people the guarantee of a job, education or formal training.
- A £25m fund to provide retraining for 10,000 people who have lost their jobs or are at risk of doing so
- a £1.6bn Green New Deal including measures to decarbonise the way homes and buildings are heated, reducing emissions, tackling fuel poverty and a £100m Green Jobs fund
- £500 million for infrastructure to support active travel
- A £275m fund to help regenerate town centres
- support for digital connectivity, providing a device, unlimited data and training to 50,000 people without digital access

4.6 This highlights that there are a significant number of measures and funding available nationally which will be important to access to have the fullest benefit for

the area's economy. Work will be necessary to prepare bids for support and make arrangements locally for delivery. By blending UK/Scottish and local support the fullest range of benefits can be gained and the scale of adverse economic impact reduced.

- 4.7 In this context it is worth noting that the Scottish Government's recent Programme for Government included an announcement on the creation of a Grangemouth Future Industries Board, which will align with the work of partners locally and will enable coordination of Government support for the Grangemouth industrial cluster acknowledging the need for a 'just transition' to a low carbon future.
- 4.8 To aid the work to finalise the economic recovery plan the economic impact report at Appendix 1 also includes a summary of the consultation exercise that has been undertaken in recent weeks. This involved:
- a survey of 440 businesses
  - a series of sector based 'Falkirk Talks Covid-19' focus groups
  - a community survey conducted for the Council Plan
- 4.9 The results of these exercises are summarised in the report and highlight:
- Many Falkirk businesses have been heavily impacted by Covid-19. Of those surveyed, 80.7% have lower business optimism than last year and 72.3% have lost income this year. As lockdown eases 44.7% of businesses said they will be reopening with reduced hours and 36.9% said they will reopen with normal hours.
  - Supply chains have been disrupted and the lack of (and cost of) PPE has affected some firms, there has been very little feedstock for recycling and construction and other materials have been difficult to source.
  - 84.8% of businesses who replied to the business survey applied for financial support during the coronavirus situation. 57.4% of businesses applied to Falkirk Council for support and advice, followed by Business Gateway (25.9%).
  - 29.4% of business surveyed said finances was the key issue in planning for recover, this was followed by 27.1% saying maintaining business/customers and this included customer confidence. Safety included PPE, screens and social distancing followed with 18.1%.
  - Responses to the Council's community survey indicate that 95.6% believe creating employment opportunities and 94.5% believe opportunities for young people, modern apprenticeships, higher and further education, training, voluntary work, employment are either very important or important
  - Measures to support the economy were deemed either very important or important:
    - Supporting businesses, job creation and investment opportunities (92.8%)
    - Maintaining a good road network (89.5%)
    - Support and training for job seekers (88.3%)
    - Running sustainable public and active transport initiatives (including school transport) (86.4%)
    - Creating opportunities to do business with Falkirk Council (80.6%)

- In dedicated responses, town centre businesses have recently reinforced the plight of the town centre, with Cygnet properties indicating their intention to close Callendar Square shopping centre. Ellandi, owners of the Howgate have advised that they are considering an approach to repurposing the shopping centre which they hope to share with the Council in the Autumn. Their work highlights concerns over the low level of spend potential of households in Falkirk and the over supply of retail floorspace in the town centre which inhibit the centre's future.

4.9 The draft of the economic recovery plan has been the subject of consultation in recent weeks and the finalised version of the plan is presented at Appendix 2. The plan addresses a number of the factors mentioned above and contained in the economic impact report that have arisen through consultation. It includes measures proposed under the following main headings:

- Targeting national level support for recovery
- Developing local partnerships for recovery
- Skills & employment support
- Communities, housing and infrastructure
- Business support
- Town centre action plan update
- Tourism action plan
- Communication

4.10 It is proposed that these actions are now progressed over the next 2 years and that periodic updates are given on progress.

## **5 Consultation**

5.1 Work to finalise the recovery plan took place through engagement with a wide variety of stakeholders including business and others in the community through the Council's consultation on the Council Plan. The outcome of this work is summarised in Appendix 1. Where appropriate to the measures being pursued, further rounds of consultation will be undertaken to ensure that their impact is of fullest benefits to participants.

## **6. Implications**

### **Financial**

6.1 The impact of Covid-19 for business and local communities is likely to be significant and substantial financial support will be necessary to enable the economy to recover. It is important to take fullest advantage of the funding support available at national level and take action to frame and blend resources to maximum benefit locally. This will take significant effort, in preparing bids and

establishing mechanisms for delivery. It is likely that some additional financial support to enable effective delivery of the measures contained in the action plan will be necessary. In particular, support to progress the work relating to the Investment Zone, support business, employability and town centres are anticipated to require additional resources. It is intended that this requirement is highlighted as part of the work relating to the Council's budget and business plan to be considered at the meeting of the Council at the end of September 2020.

Business Loans Scotland (BLS) is a consortium of Scotland's Local Authorities, set up to manage loan funds for new and growing small & medium sized businesses across Scotland. BLS builds on previous loan fund including, the East of Scotland Investment Fund (ESIF) of which the Council was a member.

Since 2014 the loan scheme match funding was financed by the consortium of Scotland's Local Authorities of which Falkirk Council was one. However BLS is now the Fund Manager for a £7 million loan fund created in 2018 to invest in new and growing Scottish businesses which is fully financed by the Scottish Government and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). BLS legal arrangements have recently been amended to allow withdrawal of the local authority committed funds.

Falkirk Council has a Business Loans Scotland balance of £232,132 within the BLS loan fund structures and it is suggested that this be withdrawn to support the business support measures identified in the economic recovery plan including a new Covid-19 business restart loan and grant scheme, the details of which will be brought forward for approval by members.

## **Resources**

- 6.2 The delivery of the recovery plan will rely substantially on existing staff resources. Should additional support be required to deliver the actions necessary, these will be identified in the finalised plan.

## **Legal**

- 6.3 There are no immediate legal issues identified at this time.

## **Risk**

- 6.4 There are a number of significant risks for the Falkirk area economy that might arise as a consequence of Covid-19 with impacts on the area's business base and employment anticipated. These risks have been considered in the course of finalising the recovery plan with measures directed towards the sectors or elements of the economy anticipated to be at highest risk. In addition, emerging risks associated with e.g. a second wave of Covid-19 or Brexit, will require to be assessed.

## **Equalities**

- 6.5 The recovery plan aims to target the specific impacts of Covid-19's economic effects for local communities, including those in most vulnerable groups and aim to ensure delivery of more sustainable and inclusive growth.

## **Sustainability/Environmental Impact**

- 6.6 The economic recovery plan presents significant opportunities to adopt new approaches to the delivery of sustainable economic growth through investment in enhanced infrastructure and supporting measures including a green new deal for job creation and skills.

## **Council of the Future**

- 6.7 The recovery plan will play an important role in assisting delivery of the measures contained in the Council of the Future initiative.

## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The impact of Covid-19 on the economy of the Falkirk area has already been severe and further adverse consequences must be anticipated. The consultation activity undertaken in recent weeks has reinforced the importance of the concern being expressed by business and the wider community. It is therefore important to progress a local response which aligns well with national action and enables the most robust response. The attached economic recovery plan presents a number of measures which the Council and its partners will implement over the next 2 years. This delivery will be assisted through the provision of additional resources, should this be agreed by the Council at its meeting in September. Periodic progress updates will be supplied to members to ensure that these measures maintain their relevance and effectiveness.

.

.....  
Acting Director of Development Services

Author – Pete Reid, Acting Head of Economic Development, [pete.reid@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:pete.reid@falkirk.gov.uk)  
/Douglas Duff, Acting Director of Development Services, [douglas.duff@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:douglas.duff@falkirk.gov.uk)  
(tel: 01324504949)

Date: 11 September 2020



## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Economic Impact & Consultation Feedback

Appendix 2 – Finalised Covid – 19 Economic Recovery Plan 2020-22

### **List of Background Papers:**

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

NIL



# **Falkirk Talks Covid-19**

## **Economic Impact and Recovery Report**



Falkirk Economic Partnership  
August 2020

## Contents

Page	Section	
3		<b>Introduction</b>
4		Executive Summary
6		Methodology
7	1	<b>The Economy</b>
7	1.1	Gross Domestic Product and GVA
8	1.2	Consumer Confidence
8	1.3	Business Optimism
9	1.4	Brexit
9	1.5	Employment / Unemployment
11	1.6	Standard of Living
13	2	<b>Key Sectors</b>
15	3	<b>Towards Recovery</b>
17	4	<b>The New Normal</b>
18	5	<b>Economic Recovery Plan</b>
19	6	<b>Conclusions</b>

# Introduction

Falkirk Economic Partnership has commenced work to mitigate the effects of Covid-19 for the Falkirk economy, including its most vulnerable businesses, sectors and communities. This work looks to create capacity for renewal and growth, building on the plans for the Investment Zone and a Growth Deal bid which has secured £90 million of UK and Scottish Government funding for the area.

On 1 March 2020, the first person in Scotland tested positive for Covid-19. On 17 March NHS Scotland was placed on an emergency footing by the Scottish Government. Schools closed on 20 March and the country was placed in lockdown on 23 March. As at 2 August, there had been a total of 4,208<sup>1</sup> deaths registered in Scotland where coronavirus (Covid-19) was mentioned on the death certificate.

The necessary measures of lockdown have affected the whole of society with unprecedented disruption to education, business and communities. Scotland entered phase one of easing out of lockdown on Friday 29 May, phase two on Friday 19 June and phase three on Friday 10 July.

As lockdown is being eased a cautious approach is still required as the presence of the virus will remain for the foreseeable future. Measures are also taking place to prevent a second wave of the pandemic.

While the health implications are immense, the economic impacts have also been significant and will continue their effects for several years. The key to a full economic recovery is an effective vaccine to enable an opening of businesses and society.

This report examines the impacts of Covid-19 on the Falkirk economy, how the area has been impacted, the response during lockdown and captures the views of consultees towards planning for economic recovery.

---

<sup>1</sup> National Records of Scotland

# Executive Summary

This Economic Impact Report (EIR) uses data from published sources, the Falkirk Business Survey (appendix 1) and business leaders focus groups to address the impacts of Covid-19 on the Falkirk Economy and set the context for economic recovery.

The Falkirk Business Survey (July 2020) returned 444 responses and 36 business leaders from 6 sectors participated in 5 focus groups.

The Scottish economy has now stopped shrinking but remains much smaller than a few short months ago. The national economy is now 22.1% smaller than it was in February<sup>2</sup>.

Falkirk businesses have been heavily impacted by Covid-19. Of those surveyed, 80.7% have lower business optimism than last year and 72.3% have lost income this year. As lockdown eases 44.7% of businesses said they will be reopening with reduced hours and 36.9% said they will reopen with normal hours.

The effects have been mitigated by financial support in the form of UK and Scottish Government grants and loans and by staff furlough. In the event of a second or localised lockdown, with no furlough or business grants, many businesses would not survive.

The Chemicals Sector (apart from aviation and motor fuels) main markets have only been moderately impacted, and their main challenges have been in keeping the plants running and staff safe from Covid-19.

Directors of small companies have been under immense pressure of work, as they cannot be furloughed and were often the only person left working.

Businesses that were in total lockdown have been most affected financially. There have been some positives, it has been a busy time for property developers with sales being completed and new acquisitions made. Development projects in both Falkirk and Grangemouth Town Centres are being brought forward.

Supply chains have been an issue, lack of (and cost of) PPE has affected some firms, there has been very little feedstock for recycling and construction and other materials have been difficult to source.

Social distancing requirements have affected all businesses with reduced sales where customers are present and increased staffing costs due to the number of staff required to manage customers, cleaning and queues.

Managing space with social distancing and working from home will be the new norm for many businesses as will being more flexible with working arrangements.

Key construction projects stopped on key sites but are now coming back on-line.


The area has seen Universal Credit claimants, rise to more than 11,000 with a rise of 66.6% in unemployment claimants between March and April 2020. Most forecasts see the underlying unemployment rate peaking at between 10% and 15% of the labour force at the

---

<sup>2</sup> Scottish Government Warwick Econometrics August 2020

end of 2020 and perhaps halving by the middle of 2021. Low earners, low income families, young people and women are the groups who will be most impacted.

The next stages are crucial and as we move forward towards recovery. Investments secured through the Falkirk and Grangemouth Growth Deal and Falkirk TiF will play a crucial part.



*The main challenges have been from mixed messages between the Scottish and UK Governments and how this affects working with different organisations North and South of the border.*

Construction and Logistics



## Methodology

This report relies on published data in setting the context for the Falkirk Economy within the Global, UK and Scottish economy. This is supplemented by data gathered locally through a business survey and focus groups with business leaders from key sectors.

The business survey (appendix 1) was conducted in July 2020 and returned around 444 responses from Falkirk Businesses. This was supplemented by a series of focus groups which took place into August. A total of 36 business leaders contributed to the focus groups(appendix 2). The participants cover a range of roles from small business owners to Managing Directors of large companies and include senior managers of national and multinational companies. The sectors include: Chemical Industries, Tourism, Retail, Logistics, Construction and Development. All business consulted contribute to the Falkirk area economy.

# Section 1: The Economy

The Scottish economy has now stopped shrinking but remains much smaller than a few short months ago. Our economy is now 22.1% smaller than it was in February prior to the Covid-19 crisis<sup>3</sup>.

The downturn in the Scottish private sector eased noticeably in July, with clear signs that the economy is approaching stabilisation<sup>4</sup>. The seasonally adjusted headline Royal Bank of Scotland Business Activity Index – a measure of combined manufacturing and service sector output – registered 49.3 in July, rising noticeably from 37.1 in June, and signalled the softest fall in private sector output since the current downturn began in March.

Similarly, new business declined only fractionally, while the 12-month outlook for activity strengthened to a five-month high.

## 1.1 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Value Added

In the UK, GDP fell by 20.4% in the month of April 2020, the largest fall since monthly records began in 1997. This was three times greater than the fall experienced during the 2008 to 2009 economic downturn.

Scotland's GDP increased by 1.5% in May after falling 18.9% in April and 5.5% in March. GDP remains 22.1% below its level in February, prior to lockdown measures. After output fell in nearly every industry during April, the results for May are more mixed with some parts of the economy seeing a pickup in activity as firms adapted to physical distancing and some returned to work. However, other industries experienced further falls in output due to the ongoing lockdown and wider impacts on activity<sup>5</sup>.

These monthly swings demonstrate the dynamism in the Economy, and it will be by the end of the year before we have the data available to show the overall impact.

KPMG published a scenario which assumes a vaccine being available from July 2021, all social distancing measures removed and pandemic-related uncertainty to dissipate by August 2021. This scenario predicts that overall GDP in Scotland will drop by 7.2% in 2020 and will recover by 2.8% in 2021.<sup>6</sup>

	2019	2020	2021
GDP	1.4	-7.2	2.8
Consumer spending	1.1	-9.5	1.3
Investment	0.6	-12.6	1.8
Unemployment rate	3.8	8.6	11.0
Inflation	1.8	1.0	0.8
Base interest rate	0.75	0.10	0.10

Table1: KPMG 2020

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government Warwick Econometrics August 2020

<sup>4</sup> Royal Bank of Scotland PMI August 2020

<sup>5</sup> Scottish Government August 2020

<sup>6</sup> KPMG, Hard Times, June 2020



KPMG also modelled Scotland GVA per local authority and table 2 is an extract of the table showing neighbouring and central belt authorities. This shows that within the KPMG scenario Falkirk fares slightly better than our neighbours in 2020 (apart from West Lothian).

Local authority	2018 GVA, £ million (nominal)	2019	2020	2021
Clackmannanshire	797	1.4%	-6.5%	3.3%
City of Edinburgh	21,173	1.1%	-6.4%	2.6%
Falkirk	3,500	1.2%	-5.8%	3.3%
Fife	7,190	0.9%	-7.2%	3.8%
Glasgow City	23,360	1.2%	-6.7%	3.4%
Stirling	2,750	1.4%	-8.2%	3.2%
West Lothian	4,567	1.7%	-5.0%	3.6%
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>142,121</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>-6.8%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>

Table 2 – Extract from KPMG table

## 1.2 Consumer Confidence

Scottish retail sales continued to fall in June, although at a slower pace than in previous months, as the difficulties facing large parts of the sector were prolonged.

Food sales registered a second month of growth. Non-food sales improved significantly due to rising online sales.

Across the UK, retailers continued to cut prices in an attempt to stimulate consumer spending, which had fallen through the floor. Shop prices fell by 2.4% in May and 1.6% in June. Non-food prices fell by 4.6% in May and then by 3.4% in June.

During the second week of reopening, retail footfall fell by 53.4% year-on-year. Different retail environments fared differently as the public heeded public health advice. The footfall decline at retail parks was 28.4%, compared to 55.4% in May. Shopping centre footfall decreased by 60.7%.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.3 Business Optimism

Falkirk businesses were asked how they felt their current business optimism compares with last quarter and last year. 63.2% replied it will be lower than last quarter. 80.7% of businesses said they would have lower optimism compared to last year.

72.3% of businesses said they would have loss of income this financial year, with 34.8% saying it will be between £1,000 to £9,999 and 39.4% said it would be between £10,000 to £49,999.

<sup>7</sup> SCDI British Retail Consortium, KPMG, Scottish Retail Consortium

62% of business believe they will be to cover the costs of your monthly fixed overheads and be able to reopen for trade without borrowing money.<sup>8</sup>

#### **1.4 Brexit**

Before the pandemic and since the UK voted to leave the EU on 23 June 2016, the UK economy grew at a substantially lower rate than prior to the referendum. The UK fell from the top to the bottom of G7 countries in terms of macroeconomic performance. New 'counterfactual' analysis illustrates the impact of the decision on prosperity in the different nations, regions and communities of the UK.

In Scotland, projected lost growth due to the Brexit vote amounts to 2.8% of Scottish GDP – or £736 per person. Only Edinburgh was identified as a potential 'Brexit vote winner' in Scotland. Aberdeen fared worst, with an estimated cost for each resident £9,060. Falkirk business would welcome more clarity around Brexit particularly around regulations and tariffs.

#### **1.5 Employment /Unemployment**

The Coronavirus Job Retention scheme (furlough) has been very welcome and useful in mitigating against unemployment in the Covid-19 emergency but this will finish at the end of October 2020.

Since the start of COVID-19, the area has seen an increase in Universal Credit claimants rise to more than 11,000 with a rise of 66.6% in unemployment claimants between March and April 2020.

Young people aged 17 are the group with the highest rates of furloughed employees. (61% of female employees aged 17 and 58% male) High rates were also seen among workers in the 20-29 age bracket, with men rather than women having the higher rate in this age group because more women work in the public health and education sectors, where furlough rates are lower. Men in their forties were the least likely age group to be furloughed.

Youth unemployment figures increased in the Falkirk area from 655(5.35%) in March 2020 to 1,250 in June 2020 (10.1%). and has increased to 10.1% in 3 months to June<sup>i</sup>

The sector with the highest rate of furloughed employees is Accommodation and Food Services at 73% followed by Arts and Entertainment at 73%, Construction 59% and Manufacturing at 40%, 29.5% of total employees in Falkirk have been furloughed. In March 2020 prior to lockdown the unemployment figure for Falkirk was 3.6% which is marginally higher than the Scottish Average of 3.3% but lower than the UK average of 3.9%<sup>9</sup>

Workers aged under 25 are two and half times more likely to work in a sector that is now shut down. These sectors employ nearly a third (30%) of all employees under 25 compared to just one in eight (13%) of those aged 25 and over<sup>10</sup>.

---

<sup>8</sup> Falkirk Business Survey July 2020

<sup>9</sup> NOMIS

<sup>10</sup> Institute of Fiscal Studies

Prior to Covid-19 there were 77,000 employees in the Falkirk Area with an additional 5,900 self-employed. This represents a furlough total of around 22,750 for Falkirk<sup>11</sup>. Whilst it is too early to make predictions on unemployment in Falkirk after October 2020, Falkirk Council's own research indicates redundancies are to be expected particularly in the retail, hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors, with particular issues for young people and apprentices. Less likely are redundancies in the Chemicals, Logistics, Property and Construction sectors, although there may be a potential risk to apprentices due to social distancing and supervision requirements. Very few employers have indicated that they will be recruiting additional staff this year.

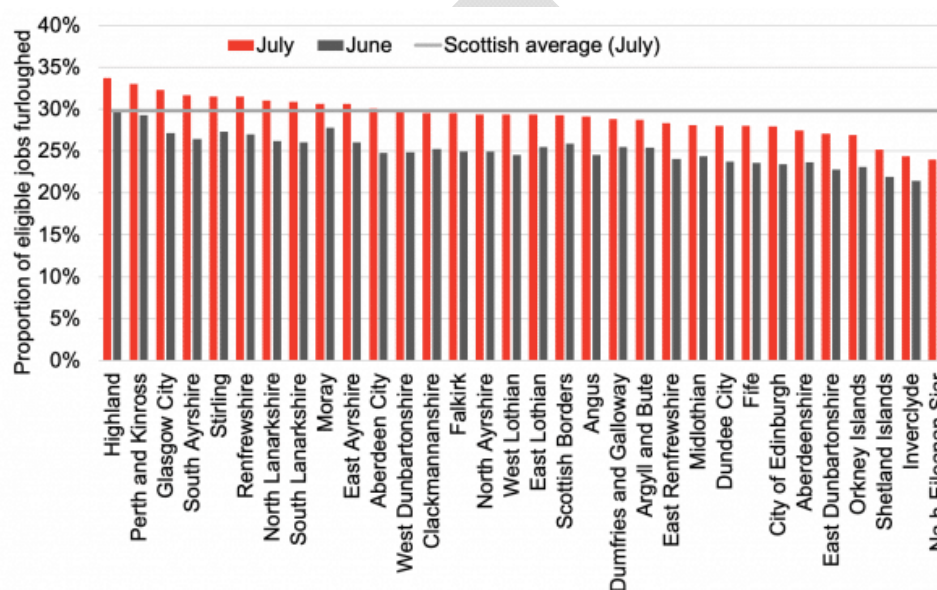
The Covid-19 shock to the labour market is around five times the magnitude of the financial shock a decade ago.<sup>12</sup>

Projections of the underlying unemployment rate in the near future depend on when and how job furlough schemes end and the possibility of a second wave of the virus.

Most forecasts see the underlying unemployment rate peaking at between 10% and 15% of the labour force at the end of 2020 and perhaps halving by the middle of 2021.

The impact is potentially greater for young women (36%) than young men (25%) with those in the younger age bracket (16-19 years) at greatest risk (40% of jobs) compared to 20-to-24 year olds (30%) with those leaving education and entering the labour market for the first time particularly at risk.<sup>13</sup>

Research by the Resolution Foundation<sup>14</sup> show that workers in the UK that have been furloughed come disproportionately from the lower end of the earnings distribution. Nearly



<sup>11</sup> HMRC

<sup>12</sup> NOMIS Labour Market Profile Falkirk, June 2020.

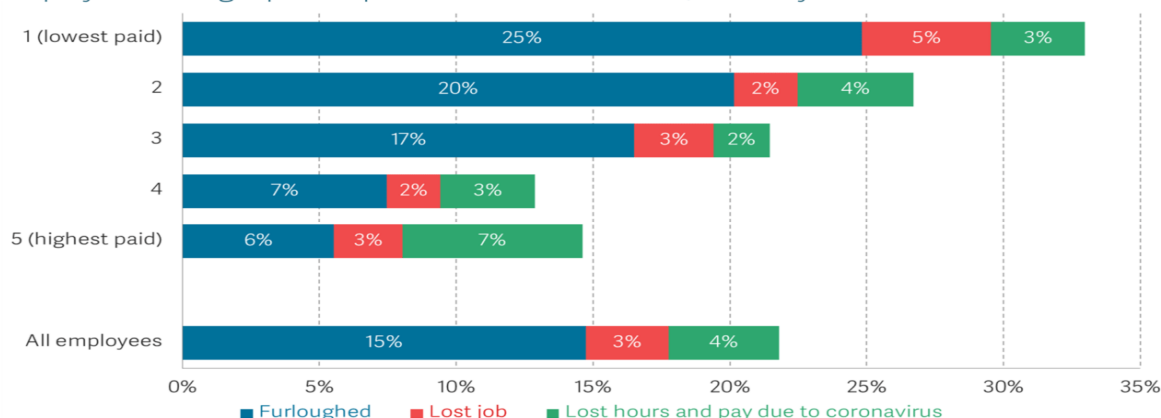
<sup>13</sup> The Royal Society of Arts

<sup>14</sup> The Resolution Foundation

one-third of workers in the lowest quintile of the earnings distribution had been furloughed or lost their jobs completely, compared with 10% in the highest quintile.

Many furloughed workers had zero or variable hours contracts; whilst those on temporary contracts often lost their jobs completely.

Proportion of employees who have experienced job changes since the coronavirus outbreak, by employee earnings quintile prior to the outbreak: UK, 6-11 May 2020



Notes: Base = all UK adults aged 18-65 who had an employee job prior to the coronavirus outbreak, and provided information on their usual earnings prior to the coronavirus outbreak (apart from for the 'all employees' category). Earnings quintiles are based on net (take-home) usual employee pay prior to the coronavirus outbreak. 'Furloughed' and 'lost job' relate to employees' main job; 'lost hours and pay due to coronavirus' captures employees not in either of these first two groups who are working fewer hours than their usual hours before the coronavirus outbreak, which they state has happened for coronavirus-related reasons, and who have also experienced decreases in earnings.  
Source: RF analysis of YouGov, Adults aged 18 to 65 and the coronavirus (COVID-19).  
© Resolution Foundation 2020  
resolutionfoundation.org

In contrast, workers at the higher end of the earnings distribution have often been working from home and many will continue to do so saving commuting and other work related costs.

## 1.6 Standards Of Living

The Living Standards Audit 2020<sup>15</sup> puts the current crisis in the context of over a decade of poor income growth with zero growth in the typical working-age household income in 2017-18 and 2018-19, with a slight improvement in 2019-20.

The Audit shows that the last few years have been particularly weak for low-income households, whose typical income actually fell in 2016-17 to 2018-19, and was no higher in 2018-19 than in 2001-02. This weakness, driven by a combination of high inflation post-referendum and the roll-out of cuts to working-age welfare, is an important backdrop to the current crisis.

The UK experienced record employment levels and real pay growth in early 2020. But, the coronavirus lockdown has hit living standards hard. The Resolution Foundation estimate that typical non-pensioner household incomes were 4.5 per cent lower in May 2020 than in 2019-20, this is on a par with the fall in household incomes recorded during the rampant inflation associated with the mid-1970s oil crisis.

The labour market impact of this crisis has fallen most heavily on low earners, but there was a £9 billion boost to welfare announced in March 2020 that maintained income levels

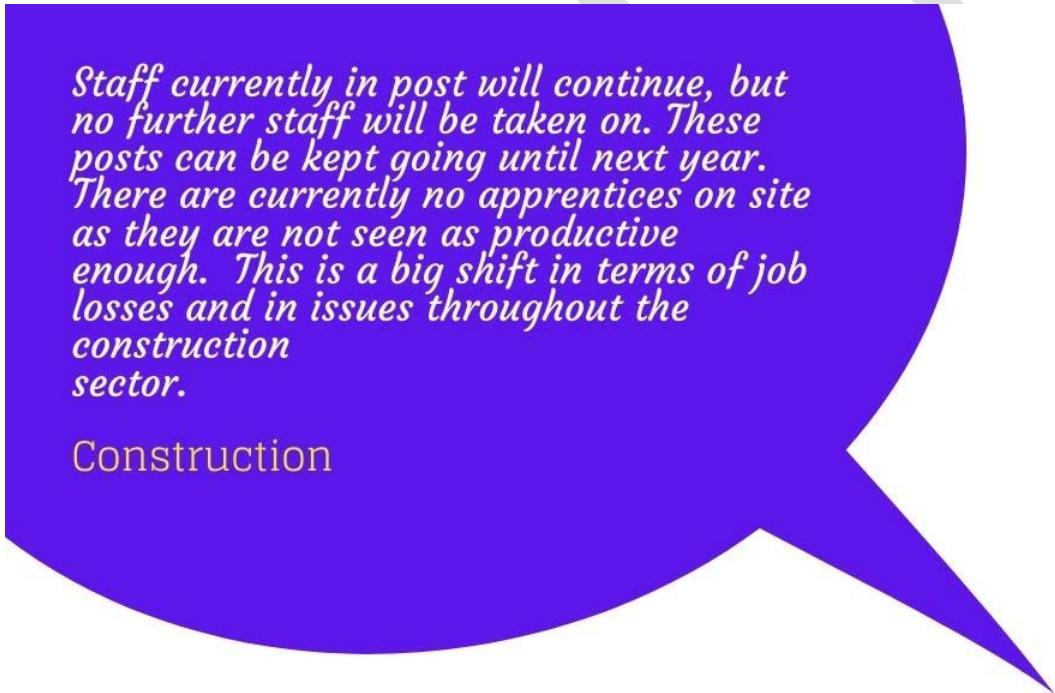
<sup>15</sup> The Living Standards Audit 2020, The Resolution Foundation

however without this incomes for the lowest earners might have been at least 8 per cent lower in May 2020.

For many low-income families, the crisis has been accompanied by falling savings rates and a growing use of high-cost consumer debt, with one-in-four adults in the second poorest fifth of the income distribution reporting increased use of consumer debt.

For some people, temporary earnings reductions during lockdown will be followed by a return to full-paid work. But unemployment is rising, Universal Credit is less generous than furlough, and there will be further hits to household incomes for many.

In April 2021 there is a planned return to pre-crisis levels of support which will reduce disposable incomes by over £1,000 a year for over 6 million households, containing 18 million people; reducing the average income of the poorer half of the population by an estimated 4 per cent in 2021-22.



*Staff currently in post will continue, but no further staff will be taken on. These posts can be kept going until next year. There are currently no apprentices on site as they are not seen as productive enough. This is a big shift in terms of job losses and in issues throughout the construction sector.*

Construction

## Section 2: Key Sectors in Scotland

Impact varies widely across the diverse sectors of the Scottish economy. Working from home has been possible for some sectors. Scottish Government stats show that the most damage has been sustained by those which have been required to close or where working at home is not possible, including Accommodation & Food Services (-89.8%) and Arts, Culture & Recreation Services (-54.3%). The Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing sector has shrunk by 7.7%, The production sector has shrunk by 18.7% , Manufacturing picked back up by 7.1% in May, the Construction sector has shrunk by 39% and the Services sector has shrunk by 21.9%. Chemical, pharmaceutical and petroleum output declined the least, at just 3.5%. Falkirk and Grangemouth businesses operating in this sector have indicated that most of the impact has been in road and aviation fuels where approximately 50% of production has been lost.

Businesses across Falkirk have been heavily impacted by Covid-19. This effects have been mitigated by financial support in the form of grants and loans and by staff on furlough. However even with mitigation we have lost 3.5% of the businesses who responded to the Falkirk business survey. Finances, consumer confidence and issues of social distancing remain key issues for the majority of businesses.

84.8% of businesses who replied to the business survey applied for financial support during the coronavirus situation. 57.4% of businesses applied to Falkirk Council for support and advice, followed by Business Gateway (25.9%).

In the event of a second or localised lockdown and with no furlough or business grants, many businesses say they would not survive.

Covid-19 lockdown has affected different sectors in different ways. Furlough has been a lifeline for many businesses, with one logistics and construction firm reporting that they furloughed 200 staff. This is true of all sectors except for those on the front-line of the Covid-19 response and those providing essential services, the chemicals sector, and some e-commerce. The Chemicals Sector (apart from aviation and motor fuels) main markets have only been moderately impacted, however their main challenges have been in keeping the plants running and staff safe from Covid-19.


Furlough presented opportunities for some firms, e.g. a local haulier picked up business as other firms furloughed the majority of their staff and they maintained 60% of pre-Covid capacity. Directors of small companies have been under immense pressure of work, as they cannot be furloughed and were often the only person left working.

Businesses that were in total lockdown have been most affected financially with retailers, leisure, hospitality and construction having lost most of their income for a period of 3 months and more. Even businesses that open including supermarkets have seen a loss of trade, with one supermarket reporting 40% down. Grangemouth Port has seen a drop in business of around 30–40% since the end of March with construction materials, aviation and road fuels at minimal levels.

There have been some positives and it has been a busy time for developers with some sales being completed and acquisitions made. Several development projects in both Falkirk and Grangemouth are being brought forward and some businesses have been spending the down time on improvements and maintenance.

Supply chains have been an issue, lack of PPE has affected some firms, there has been very little feedstocks for recycling and construction and other materials have been difficult to source.

Social distancing requirements have affected all businesses with reduced sales where customers are present and increased costs of number of staff required to manage customers, cleaning and queues.



*There needs to be more joined up promotion of the area, improving connectivity between attractions, possible grants to support businesses to move to cashless and businesses to continue to strengthen the Partnership working approach*

Tourism and Hospitality

*Redundancies are already in consultation. Loss of beauty staff, management and retail staff.  
We fear that we will lose status of a large shop and be reduced to a small local pharmacy.*

National Retailer

## Section 3 - Towards Recovery

The logistics, chemicals, construction and property businesses that contributed to the focus groups are confident that they have the resources to see their way through.

29.4% of business surveyed said finances was the key issue in planning for recover, this was followed by 27.1% saying maintaining business/customers and this included customer confidence. Safety included PPE, screens and social distancing followed with 18.1%.

23.6% of businesses surveyed said that relaxation of certain regulations to allow businesses to adapt quickly to the new challenges being faced would be required over the next 6 months to allow business to survive after the coronavirus situation, this was followed by 19.5% needing information on where to source finance and funding.

Key construction projects stopped on key sites but are now coming back on line, but this represents a delay of 6 months. Businesses are looking now at how the current business model can be more efficient and cost control more significant. Businesses that rely on events are looking at significantly different business models. Construction firms are reporting full order books, longer working weeks and hours, and different ways of working. Flexibilities have been negotiated with their workforces as they try to catch up on projects. This is also a feature for retailers and service businesses as they experience a post lockdown surge and an increase in hours worked.

Managing space with social distancing and working from home will be the new norm for many businesses as will being more flexible with working arrangements. Some activities do not lend themselves to remote working e.g. site safety, service industries.

Social distancing has been implemented within all workplaces, as has track and trace.

There is a real need to see more confidence in markets. Where flexible working has reduced numbers on site and resultant energy saving and environmental concerns there may be opportunities to save on office accommodation. However it is difficult to see if this will persist over the long term as WFH for long periods is proving to be challenging, not least in terms of staff mental health. Property developers are not concerned about future office demand, believing that working habits will adapt and they are positioning themselves to respond to this.

Businesses feel that the longer term commercial picture and the shape of economic recovery post Covid-19 is just too hard to judge at the moment in terms of its impact on the business.

The Chemical businesses in the main have not taken a big hit and have in some cases managed to switch production to support the Covid-19 efforts. There are however still some uncertainties over future plans. Larger firms are concerned for their contractors who have not been able to come on site.

Business who have the advantage of having a decent cash reserve and being balanced financially will do better however even for them there are concerns over risks of markets lacking confidence.



Business that have invested in additional IT spend for flexible working are finding that this has been beneficial, however for smaller firms the entry cost into online selling has been prohibitive.

Tourism visitor attractions are having to balance between visitors who are not adhering to social distancing measures and those who are extremely cautious. There has been a big move towards cashless payments in Tourism and Retail with 60% of customers looking to pay by card and pre-booking is a necessity for many. Accommodation providers will struggle until they can start to host larger events.

For staff, working with PPE especially with extended hours of work is one of the biggest challenges.

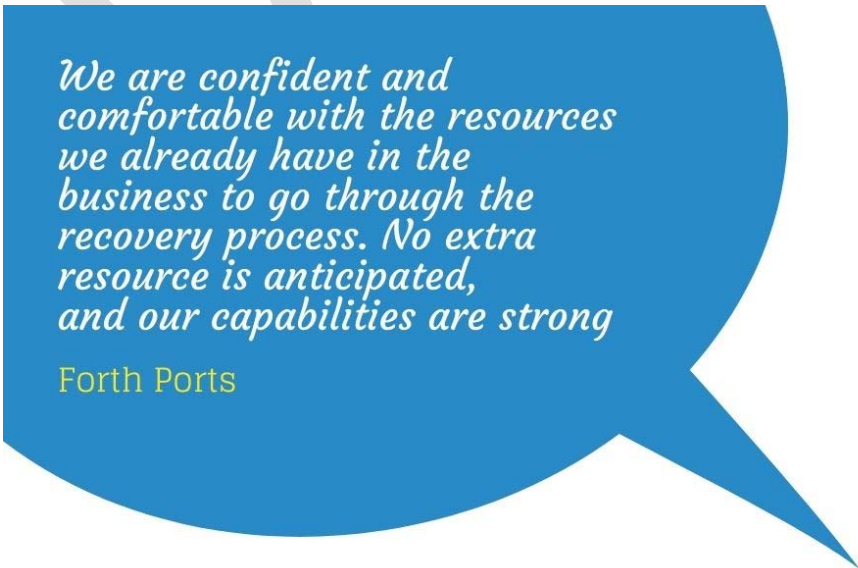
Retail is suffering and this is not helped by high fixed costs such as rent and rates. Landlords are having to deal with numerous requests for rent reduction. Many retailers are worried about the longer term with a very real threat around financial viability of individual shops and shopping centres.

Customer experiences are also very different with no makeovers, no music etc.

The cost of PPE is significant to all business with one of the larger businesses having spent £200k on PPE this year.

It has been an interesting time for logistics with the Port seeing the last three months as a case study of what the world could look like ten years' time – less demand for hydrocarbon and the importance of the green agenda. The port is looking at development of rail infrastructure and will be investing in improvement works from this September.

Before Lockdown, the largest haulage firm ran four Anglo-Scottish trains per day whereas with passenger numbers down, they have gone from 4 standard to running 2 mega-length trains. There are 24 containers per standard train compared to 36/38 on one mega-length train.



*We are confident and comfortable with the resources we already have in the business to go through the recovery process. No extra resource is anticipated, and our capabilities are strong*

Forth Ports

## Section 4: The New Normal – Wellbeing, Equality, Environment, Working from Home

Working from home has been a feature for Falkirk Businesses with almost all staff who can work from home doing so, this has been seen as mostly positive and even businesses that were not fans of flexible working are now exploring these options for the future. However working from home is not for everyone and in manufacturing and chemicals, core staff are required to be on site.

The OECD<sup>16</sup> reports that widespread telework (homeworking) may remain a permanent feature of the future working environment. While more widespread telework in the longer-run has the potential to improve productivity and a range of other economic and social indicators (worker well-being, gender equality, regional inequalities, housing, emissions), its overall impact is ambiguous and carries risks especially for innovation and worker satisfaction. They recommend that to minimise the risks of more widespread teleworking harming long-term innovation and decreasing worker well-being, policy makers should assure that teleworking remains a choice and is not 'overdone' and that co-operation among social partners may be key to addressing concerns e.g. of 'hidden overtime'.

A report from the Carnegie Trust<sup>17</sup> presents six propositions for building back better in the recovery. The report, and accompanying [blog post](#), argues that Government needs to put wellbeing at the heart of the recovery - from the outset.

A post on the IMF blog site<sup>18</sup> argues that we have a once-in-a-century shot at building forward better: a world that is fairer and more equitable; greener and more sustainable; smarter and, above all, more resilient. To achieve this, action is needed to:

- (1) invest in people—in education, health, social protection, and in preventing the sharp increase in inequality this crisis could produce;
- (2) support low-carbon and climate-resilient growth, including through smart allocation of public spending; and
- (3) take advantage of the digital transformation, whether through greater use of e-government platforms to enhance efficiency and transparency while cutting red tape, e-learning, or remote work.

---

<sup>16</sup> OECD July 2020

<sup>17</sup> Carnegie Trust, Jennifer Wallace, Douglas White and Sarah Davidson, 2020

<sup>18</sup> Kristalina Georgeiva July 2020

## Section 5: The Economic Recovery Plan

The public and private sector are working collectively to develop an Economic Recovery Plan for Falkirk and there are significant established and new foundations to build on. These include The Falkirk Economic Partnership, The Falkirk Business Improvement Districts and Investment being brought forward by The Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zone Growth Bid, the Falkirk TiF and the private sector. Forth Ports, Ineos O&P, Scottish Canals and Rosebank Distillers all have significant projects. In addition there is interest from property developers in our town centres.


The Covid-19 emergency has brought forward a strong business and community response to tackle the health and economic repercussions and this will be built on to ensure ongoing dialogue with businesses and communities. Falkirk businesses have shown a great deal of resilience and willingness to work together to support the local economy and have given their time to support the development of the recovery plan.

Falkirk businesses were asked what they would like to see in the recovery plan and comments and suggestions are as follows:

- Significant efforts are still needed to contain the pandemic, as any future localised or national lockdown would be economically ruinous for many Falkirk businesses.
- There has been a good deal of support expressed for the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zone Plans and this should form key parts of the Economic Recovery Plan.
- The main business sectors needing support are retail, hospitality and leisure and this may be in the form of more financial help (but less debt please), marketing of the area to visitors and locals and better linkages e.g. (the pink bus) around key sites.
- There are strong views about support to our town centres, and particularly around the fixed overhead of non-domestic rates and both property owners and business operators ask that the Government look into this as a matter of urgency.
- Projects that keep consumer spending going and some collective thinking about how we make the town centre a bit more attractive and give some incentive to open up cafes, restaurants or entertainment
- Get public services back in to work places and in town, bring forward the HQ/ Arts Centre for the Town.
- The construction industry would like to see an intervention in support of apprentices and that public funded construction projects are accelerated.
- Property developers would like clearer communication and assistance to help projects get moving forward. They would like to accelerate their Falkirk Town Centre redevelopment projects for the high street creating relevant retail.
- The Chemicals industry would like government to on shore their spend, particularly in the case of PPE and other products where standards from abroad are poor.
- Generally, there is a call for more clarity around Brexit, particularly around regulations and tariffs.

## Section 6 Conclusions

Covid-19 has impacted all aspects of our lives and our Economy will take some years to recover. Falkirk business particularly those that provide face to face customer experiences have been most impacted and Chemicals Manufacturing the least impacted. Unemployment is rising and incomes for many will be lower, this will be most true of lower income families, young people and women. The economic recovery will take some time and will depend on strong economic partnerships between public and private sector, a return of business and consumer confidence. However there are some real strengths in Falkirk's Industrial Manufacturing base and business and other communities have come together and are working together collectively to provide strong leadership. The Economic Recovery Plan backed by public investment will set the conditions for Falkirk's Economic Recovery.



*The  
public sector and business should  
maintain open and transparent  
relationships  
and share thoughts and views.*

Logistics

# Acknowledgements

Falkirk Economic Partnership would like to acknowledge the support of business leaders from the following organisations who participated in the Falkirk Talks Covid-19 Focus Groups :

Angel Feathers

John Mitchell Haulage

Asda Falkirk

Kersebrock Cabins

Bellair

Lyall Building Solutions (SL)

Bo'ness and Kinneil Railways

MacDonald Inchyra

Calachem

Matheson Plumbing

Callendar Estates

Maxmos

Carron Valley Formal Dress

Petroineos

Corbetts Jewellers

Renella

Crunchy Carrots

REWD Group

Falkirk Community Trust

Scottish Canals

Falkirk Delivers

Specsavers

First for Frames

Tollbooth Inn

Forth Ports

WH Malcolm

The Helix, Home of the Kelpies

Wilko

Historic Environment Scotland

Howgate

Impact Solutions

Thank you to Falkirk Council, Scottish Enterprise, Falkirk Tourism Partnership and Falkirk Delivers who helped facilitate the focus groups.

**Falkirk Economic Partnership**  
**Covid – 19 Economic Recovery Plan 2020-22**  
**Phase 4 – Recovery**

	<b>Task –</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Resource</b>
	<b><i>Targeting national level support for recovery</i></b>				
1	Deliver Investment Zone Growth Deal, Falkirk TIF town centre and tourism action plans to achieve positive impacts for communities, health, town centres, housing investment, place development.	Dec 20	SG, SFT, FC	Ensuring focused national and Community Partnership policy support and investment alignment to Investment Zone and Falkirk and Grangemouth Town Centres Action Plan delivery	Existing Revenue Budget
2	Participate in national economic recovery support measures, including business support, Brexit readiness ,response to redundancies and management of risk ref 2 <sup>nd</sup> Covid-19 Lockdown. Maintain strong engagement with SLAED/National Business Gateway Unit, Scottish Enterprise to target support.	March 23	CoSLA, SLAED, ESEC, Business Gateway National Unit, Scottish Enterprise, Visit Scotland	Input to Government support, policy and funding for retail, tourism and SME business communities to ensure most effective delivery models and minimise economic impacts for the Falkirk area.	Existing Revenue Budget

3	<p>Progress delivery of the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zone (IZ) initiative with direct action to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise and agree key delivery projects from agreed Outline Business Case within £90m award envelope</li> <li>• Confirm Heads of Terms for delivery and proceed with final business case with delivery timescales, community and economic impacts</li> <li>• Establish dedicated IZ Project Delivery team and support</li> <li>• Engage with and support key partners delivering Just Transition and Sustainability investment objectives for the Falkirk/Grangemouth area to align Council IZ and sustainable objectives</li> </ul>	<p>Oct 20</p> <p>Jan 21</p> <p>March 23</p> <p>Nov 20</p> <p>Oct 20</p>	<p>UK &amp; Scottish Govts, FC, Falkirk Economic Partnership, Scottish Enterprise, NECCUS</p>	<p>Establish key early investment projects to allow Detailed Business Case to be finalized to UK and Scottish Govts</p> <p>Direct engagement and profiling of Council area in national policy direction and investment in low carbon agenda</p>	<p>Additional resources required for business case and project management.</p>
4	<p>Development of a Forth Valley regional approach to recovery involving Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils in the delivery of transport, business support, tourism, inward investment and sustainability outputs, aligning with City Deal and Growth Deal awards.</p>	<p>March 21</p>	<p>SG, FC, SC, CC</p>	<p>Service improvement and integration to support regional economic growth and closer collaborative working</p>	<p>Existing Revenue Budget</p>

	<b><i>Developing local partnerships for recovery</i></b>				
1	Deliver closer localised business support engagement and working with Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise, FSB and FV Chamber of Commerce to maximise business support opportunities and resources.	March 23	FC, SE, FSB, FV Chamber	Deliver stronger conjoined direct business support to retail, tourism and SME business communities to target most effective delivery support models and minimize economic impacts for the Falkirk area.	Existing Revenue Budget
2	Deliver updated Falkirk Town Centre Partnership Action Plan in liaison with Falkirk BID.	March 22	FC, Falkirk BID, Town Centre Partnership	Deliver town centre stewardship measures and identified town centre regeneration measures to support retail, tourism economic sectors	Existing Revenue Budget
3	Maintain Town Centres Covid-19 Working Group giving one-stop Corporate statutory support approach to businesses and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Covid-19 lockdown readiness. localised measures necessary to help safeguard the public, share resources and expertise and maximize the local economic value of such activity.	March 23	FC, Falkirk BID	Localised support and communication measures to support safeguarding the public and local economic activity.	Existing Revenue Budget
4	Delivery and promotion of transport and active travel measures during Covid-19 by a initiating Spaces for People fund support and policy	Dec 20	FC/Transport Scotland	Supporting workplace access and essential services using active	Existing Revenue Budget



	implementation into significant investment proposals			travel and traffic planning strategy review	
5	Support and Communicate and deliver PACE redundancy support for affected companies	March 23	FC/ PACE Partners/SE/CoSLA/SLAED	Ensuring enhanced redundancy support policy measures in place and identified to support business sectors	Existing Revenue Budget
6	Enhanced support of Procurement policy objectives for local contract awards in Falkirk TIF and Investment Zone through Community Benefits clauses, supplier events and Supplier Development Programme.	March 23	FC/ SDP/Business Gateway	Supporting local business to be procurement ready and access to Council supply and investment contracts.	Existing Revenue Budget
7	Initiate streamlining of planning regulatory process, to accelerate planning approvals and review mitigation impact on viability of developer contributions, addressing implications of Covid-19 for design, access and placemaking.	March 23	FC/SEPA	Supporting development investment	Existing Revenue Budget
	<b><i>Skills &amp; Employment Support</i></b>				
1	Introduce formal policy arrangements aligned to the current and future Council workforce development plan	March 21	FC/Scot Govt/ SDS/FVC	Mitigate impact on the labour market and assist people into the workplace	Existing Revenue Budget
2	Develop a robust support tool box of digital tools for skills development with participants targeted to Falkirk Council digital strategy	December 20			Existing Revenue Budget
3					

	<p>Increase of staff resource; to support front line employability support work including PACE support. This ensures the core budget is flexible as there is not little scope to extend existing contract funds for additional discretionary support activities.</p>			<p>Support to non eligible employment programme businesses to grow priority group employment opportunities meeting needs of increased numbers of unemployed residents and support economic recovery within the local labour market.- total participants supported 160 - 200 per annum</p>	<p>Additional employability programme resource required</p>
4	<p>Delivery of Increased Employer Recruitment 75% cost Incentives and Job Creation Programmes for young people and those further from the labour market. Additional funding allocated to support SME's and vulnerable participants to progress into private sector employment and opportunities</p>			<p>Total participants supported 77 programme positions supported over 2 years</p>	<p>Additional employability programme resource required</p>
5	<p>Working with Forth Valley College and other partners, initiate support for a low carbon industry challenge for engineering apprentices</p>			<p>Support Just Transition and Investment Zone chemical cluster sectors</p>	<p>Existing Revenue Budget</p>

	<b><i>Communities, Housing and Infrastructure</i></b>				
1	Maintain support to COVID19 Community Resilience Response	Jan 21	UK & Scottish Govts FC/Falkirk BID	Area economic support and community employment, training and placemaking opportunities underpinning economic recovery and confidence	Existing Revenue Budget
2	Progress delivery of the Falkirk and Grangemouth Investment Zone Detailed Business case delivery timetable, economic impact and secure Heads of Terms	Mar 21			
3	Finalise Investment Zone Inclusive Growth and Community Wellbeing detailed business case development	Mar 21			
4	Delivery of next stage Falkirk TIF infrastructure investment projects – A904/Westfield Bridge and Roads infrastructure	Oct 20			
5	Re-evaluate and agree updated infrastructure investment programmes for SHIP and education for housing investment programme projects	March 23			
6	Promote approved Adopted LDP2 and finalise Action Programme				
7	Progress delivery of Housing investment programme including introduction of projects in town centres				
8	Enable variation of terms of regulatory requirements placed upon industry/developers via	December 20		Progress stalled developments	

	<p>planning and other regulations to help stimulate business growth &amp; development.</p> <p>Progress active travel programmes e.g. Spaces for People</p>	March 21			
1	<p><b><i>Business Support Measures</i></b></p> <p>PACE Delivery– Additional redundancy support measures and activities for local businesses - £90,000 funding from Scottish Govt to provide immediate support to individuals who are in scope for redundancy. additional top up support £50,000 per annum</p>		ETU/SDS/DWP	<p>support to individuals who are in scope for redundancy to increase their digital skills, provide additional employability support and a request to deliver webinars on how to become self-employed is being considered.</p> <p>COST</p>	<p>£90,000 external funding provided to Falkirk 20/21 only. Additional support for redundancy support needed</p>
2	<p>Digital Boost Delivery- The DigitalBoost programme in Forth Valley has received an additional supplementary £45,000 Scottish Government will consider additional national funding programme of digital grants to businesses to purchase hardware and software for their business.</p>		FC/BG/SG	<p>Support businesses to include to increase webinars, coaching sessions, clinics and 1-2-1 support.</p>	<p>Existing Revenue Budget</p>
3	<p>Facilitating business networking online/ virtual Having spoke to FSB and FV Chamber</p>		FC/FSB/FV Chamber	<p>Support business sectors with facilitated network support groups to shar</p>	<p>Additional business support resource need</p>

				and disseminate critical growth and business support information and peer to peer support	
4	<p><i>Financial Support – Grants and Loans</i>  <i>It is recognised through consultation that businesses need additional support to recover from the economic impact of the Coronavirus.</i></p> <p><i>Establish new programme of grant support to be delivered by Falkirk Council Business Gateway. Over a two year period to businesses and people self-employed .</i></p> <p><b>New Business Covid-19 Restart Loan</b> - offers small and start-up businesses and people self-employed with interest free loans between £1,000 to £5,000</p>		FC/BG	<p><i>To support economic growth and resilience and provide direct business support intervention</i></p> <p>To support with short-term business cashflow. Restart Loans to be available to both new and existing businesses based in Falkirk area. Scope of Businesses supported 25- 115 over two years</p>	Existing Revenue Budget - £115,000 Loanfund balance
5	<p><b>New Business Resilience Grant</b> - provides a 50% match-funded grant from £1,000 up to £10,000 to support small and medium sized businesses, self-employed.</p>		FC/BG	<p>To supporting changed objectives and plans for growth new models of delivery to sustain or grow the business through Covid-19.</p>	Existing Revenue Budget – inc use of BLS Loan Fund balance

6	<b>New Business Adaptation Grant</b> - provides a match-funded grant from £1,000 to £2,500 to help small and medium sized businesses, including people self-employed, to adapt their premises to meet physical distancing requirements.		FC/BG	<p>Scope of businesses supported 10 – 155 over two years</p> <p>Direct support to businesses to grow during Covid-19 restrictions and meet statutory adjustments. Scope of businesses supported 30-75 over two years</p>	<p>Existing Revenue Budget - £75,000 BLS Loan Fund balance</p>
7	Grant and Loan Fund administration – to be externally administered on behalf of Falkirk Council £15,000 per annum		FC/BG	<p>Provide application support and financial compliance</p>	<p>Business support resource need</p>
8	International Export support – Expert help given removal of Scottish Enterprise support		FC/BG	<p>International business support for exporting initiatives. Scope of businesses supported 15-20</p>	<p>Business support resource need</p>
9	Commercial rent deferment support. Sustain measures to secure agreement between landlords and tenants over deferral of rent due to the Council		FC	<p>Direct support to Council tenants to enable them to sustain tenancy</p>	<p>Business support resource impact to existing revenue budget.</p>

	<b><i>Town Centres Action Planning</i></b>				
1	Maintain delivery of town centre emergency Covid-19 response to falkirk and district centres and bids to Scottish Town Partnership Resilience funds building on £62,500 awarded to date.	March 21	FC/Falkirk BID/Falkirk Town Centre Partnership/ Covid-19 Community Resilience Response	Supporting continued business recovery, locking-in local spend, town centre stewardship and improving safety for all town centre use	£62,500 external funding provided to Falkirk towns 20/21 only. Additional town centres support resource need identified.
2	Deliver Falkirk Town Centre Action Plan actions and finalise Falkirk Council asset investment plans for ensuring town centre regeneration objectives.		FC/Falkirk BID/Falkirk Town Centre Partnership/Community Planning Partnership		Existing Revenue Budget
3	Town Centre Trader Digital Business Support Grant With additional funding, this may be extended to district town centres.		FC/Falkirk BID/Scottish Towns Partnership	Support for retailer business recovery and resilience to invest and grow on-line trade and marketing	Existing Falkirk BID levy budget. Towns support resource need identified: £15,000
4	Falkirk Towns Ltd budget support to support trader engagement, promotion, events and Covid-19 support measures in District Centres including town centre stewardship support staff.		FC/Falkirk BID		Town centres support resource need: Including scope for business support in 4 district centres
5	Establishment of Town Centres Maintenance Fund.		FC	Business support to trading environment.	

				Ensure annual whole life protection, stewardship and maintenance of town centre physical regeneration investment and appearance	Towns support resource need identified.
	<b><i>Tourism action planning (with VisitFalkirk Tourism Partnership)</i></b>				
1	Development of Falkirk area marketing campaign in line with Visit Scotland targeting the day visitor followed by 'staycation' markets.	Oct 20	FC/VisitFalkirk Tourism Partnership/ VisitScotland/	Supporting tourism businesses capitalising on central location and strong outdoor tourism product base	Existing Revenue Budget
2	Deliver Covid -19 local tourism action plan aligned with STERG national recovery plan. Monitor review of 5 year VisitFalkirk Tourism Strategy	Oct 20			
3	Maintain support of VisitFalkirk Tourism Partnership to support promotion and tourism business collaboration on series of packages to successfully diversify/innovative to operate in the Covid-19 impacted sector	Oct 20			
	Facilitate Hospitality Sector Track and Trace App for 1 year with direct links to national monitoring programmes in partnership with Chamber of Commerce	Oct 20	FC/VisitFalkirk Tourism Partnership/Falkirk BID/FV Chamber of Commerce	Standardised approach to gathering customer information supporting smaller businesses	Additional tourism promotion resource need identified:
4	Develop regional two/three day itineraries focused on outdoor/cycling activity and prepare for international visitors in 2021.	Oct 20		Supporting tourism businesses capitalising on central location and	Existing Revenue Budget



5	Development of joint FV area tourism packages for the Travel Trade for 2021.	Jan 21		strong outdoor tourism product base  Area promotion and exposure to international markets	Existing Revenue Budget
1	<b>Communication</b> Deliver town centres WIFI and Falkirk town centre footfall data monitoring supporting Council service delivery and community engagement	Oct 20	FC/COTF/Falkirk BID	Improve economic growth through supporting retail and business support, town centre users and improved stewardship of our town centres	Existing Revenue Budget
2	Maintain support for input and lead on daily national Covid-19 economic support policy delivery communication	Oct 20	FC/Business Gateway/Visit Scotland		
3	Deliver strong inspirational messaging that the Falkirk area will welcome visitors back when the time is right	Oct 20	FC/Business Gateway/Visit Scotland		
4	Maintain delivery of strong economic communications to businesses within all economic sectors on latest Covid-19 support, grant and other financial support available and communication framework for future Covid-19 lockdown resilience support	Oct20	FC/Business Gateway/Visit Scotland		