

The image features the Falkirk Council Coat of Arms as a background. It consists of a shield divided into four quarters. The top-left quarter shows a castle tower, the top-right a stag's head with a cross on its antlers, the bottom-left a three-masted sailing ship on waves, and the bottom-right a crowned eagle with wings spread. Above the shield is a crown with four floral motifs. A banner at the bottom contains the motto 'AINE FOR A'.

Agenda Item 4

Falkirk Council's Corporate Plan

Title: Falkirk Council's Corporate Plan
Meeting: Falkirk Council
Date: 30 September 2020
Submitted By: Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval of Falkirk Council's Corporate Plan.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 It is recommended that Council agrees:

- 1) Falkirk Council's Corporate Plan and new Council priorities.
- 2) To note that the Corporate Plan aims to embed a community-led approach to help deliver on Council priorities and Council transformation, via the proposed engagement set out in the report.

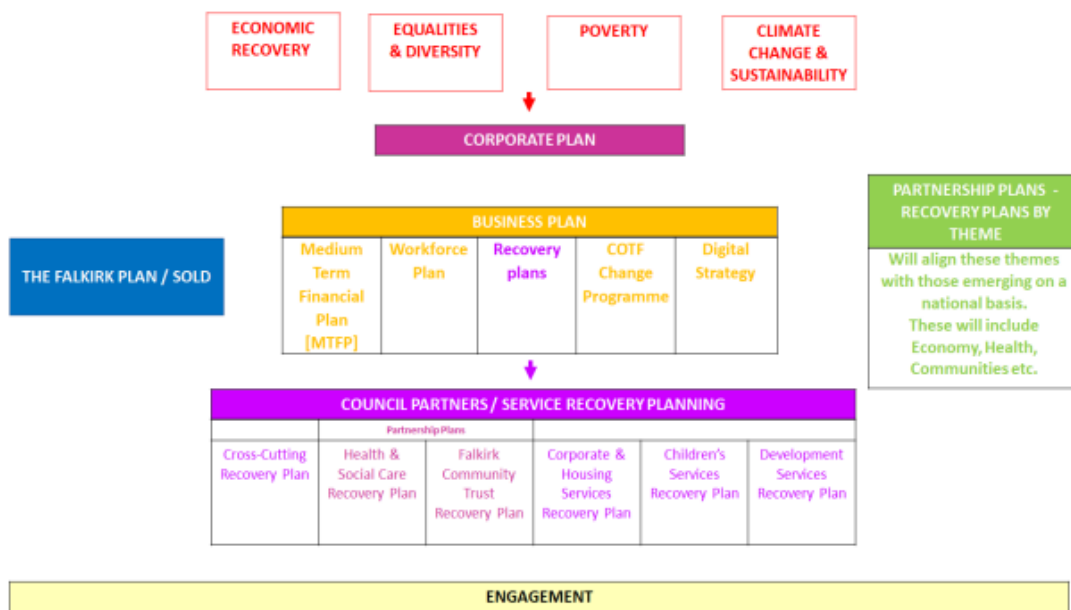
3. Background

3.1 Covid-19 has had a serious and lasting impact on our communities. Aside from the loss of life, it has caused much suffering, economic uncertainty, loss of employment, poverty and inequality and it has damaged the wellbeing of many. In many ways the Council has responded well to this crisis in supporting the vulnerable, maintaining critical service provision, providing assistance to business, planning for recovery and working with communities in new and innovative ways. The community response has been exceptional. Within the Council, and with its partners, joint working has improved, barriers and silos have been removed and much has been achieved. The challenge for us now is how we secure and build on these changes to support our communities and economy in a time of great need, pick up the pace of change, and transform the organisation to support and work with communities, whilst dealing with the substantial financial challenge which lies ahead of us.

Reviewing and updating our Corporate Plan and identifying our immediate priorities is a clear starting point and is the subject of this report. In all of this, we are of course aware that Covid-19 is not yet behind us. There is a risk of a serious second wave and as a Council we will need to be flexible and adaptable to respond to any resurgence, and reflect its impact in our plans and priorities going forward.

3.2 On 14 May 20, the [Emergency Executive](#) requested a report to be made available at a future meeting demonstrating a clear link between the Council's vision and aspirations, existing commitments to tackling poverty, wider inequalities and supporting economic development within clear priorities for recovery and renewal in the wake of the first phase of Covid-19.

- 3.3 On 11 June 20, the Emergency Executive reviewed a schematic of the Council's strategic plans and recovery framework:



- 3.4 Based on this, the Emergency Executive also reviewed a 'straw man' vision framework that would structure the Council's updated Corporate Plan and Business Plan.
- 3.5 On 16 June 20, three workshops were held with Elected Members to begin this process. The feedback showed that there was a broad agreement with the priorities represented in the new framework.
- 3.6 On 25 June 20, the Emergency Executive agreed the vision framework as the basis for progressing the Council's Corporate Plan and Business Plan.
- 3.7 To begin this process, a public consultation took place to gauge the importance of the proposed Council priorities in supporting communities through the COVID-19 recovery phase and beyond.
- 3.8 This four-week consultation ran from 16 July – 14 August 2020. This involved a survey open to all members of the public and a series of Community Conversations (focus groups). There were 1,467 responses to the survey, with eight focus groups held involving 100 people. The findings from this engagement are available on the [Council website](#)
- 3.9 The high-level results of this engagement included:

Summary of Quantitative Results

- **Enable everyone to fulfil their potential**
95.3% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.
- **People in our communities are supported to live their lives well**
94.6% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

- **Enable and empower our communities to live healthier, safer, and more sustainable lives**
93.7% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.
- **Help businesses to thrive and make the area more prosperous**
93.6% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.
- **Become an innovative and entrepreneurial council, providing effective leadership to help transform outcomes**
84.4% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

Summary of Qualitative Results

- Simplify the priorities
- Help people to live their best lives – be all they can be
- Treat people equally across all communities
- Make our communities sustainable
- Help businesses get back on track
- We do not expect the Council to be perfect – but it needs to be more innovative and have less bureaucratic ways of working

4. Considerations

Falkirk Council Priorities and Community Engagement

- 4.1 The Vision Framework in our Corporate Plan expresses our ambition that, as a Council, we want to create a greener and more economically vibrant area, with healthier, stronger and more prosperous communities that are digitally enabled and empowered to make key decisions for themselves. Through the engagement process, our communities broadly agreed with these sentiments and, as such, will see the work of the Council moving forward focus on:
- Making Falkirk, ‘The Place to Be - where everyone can fulfil their potential’ (vision and mission of the Council)
 - Ensuring:
 - Everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and build sustainable communities
 - Help businesses to thrive and make Falkirk more prosperous
 - Innovative & Entrepreneurial Council that is forward-thinking and unafraid of change (**three Council priorities**).
- 4.2 As a Council, we have listened to what communities told us during the engagement exercise. This has given us a better understanding of what’s important to them post COVID-19 and moving forward. As a result of the engagement feedback, we have moved from five priorities to three. These were road tested at a further series of Elected Member Workshops held in September 2020. The workshops indicated a good level of agreement that these three priorities should help steer the work of the Council moving forward.

- 4.3 'You said, we did' feedback will be published on the Council's website following the decisions of Elected Members at today's Council meeting, highlighting how community feedback is helping to shape the business of the Council.
- 4.4 A series of 'we will' statements are listed in our Corporate Plan for each new priority. These statements provide key actions that we aim to deliver to help achieve our priorities. This will be done through our Business Plan, Economic Recovery Plan, Digital Falkirk, our Council of the Future change programme, and business as usual improvements.
- 4.5 The three new priorities have also helped re-shape our Council of the Future change programme. The programme will focus on large scale transformation that aligns with our recovery plans and Council priorities – all of which are cited in the Council's Business Plan and referenced in the Financial Overview and Capital Programme update reports.

Council of the Future Engagement

- 4.6 Our change programme, Council of the Future, will use community feedback to help keep projects moving in the right direction. During the recent engagement process communities asked the Council to work more closely with them and involve them more in decision making. To help make that happen, we will undertake a range of community-led conversations on the major transformation projects in our business plan including:
- Enabled Communities (the Falkirk Plan) which will be co-produced with Communities and Community Planning Partners.
 - Community Choices – enabling communities to make decisions to meet local need through Participatory Budgeting.
 - Succeed Today Excel Tomorrow and the Strategic Property Review.
 - Employability - which will involve engagement with job seekers and local businesses.
 - Investing for Inclusive Growth and Economic Recovery plan, involving engagement with Falkirk Economic Partnership, Town Centre Partnership Forum, sector forums (e.g. tourism) and local businesses.

Performance

- 4.7 To measure our performance, a suite of Corporate Plan indicators is under development and will be brought forward for consideration in early course.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Falkirk Council's three new priorities have been shaped by engagement with stakeholders and communities. 'You said, we did' feedback will be published on the Council's website following the consideration of the Corporate Plan by Council. This communication will highlight how feedback from communities has helped guide the creation of this plan. The commitment is to continue with community-led conversations to ensure communities can assist in service

design and decision making through initiatives such as Community Choices. This approach will build on and complement consultation and engagement that has been undertaken already in our communities. An outline community engagement plan is part of the Council's Corporate Plan.

- 5.2 The engagement programme includes the Falkirk Plan and one of our priority projects is, 'Communities Shaping Falkirk's Future'. The project will involve extensive consultation with communities, supported by the third sector. The feedback from this consultation will mean that, as a Council, we need to take stock of how we do things to best meet the needs of our communities.
- 5.3 In line with existing arrangements for the Business Plan and the Council of the Future change programme, progress against the Corporate Plan will be reported to Elected Members on a timeous basis.

6. Implications

Financial

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan is the overarching strategy for the Council. It sets the direction for the Council's Business Plan with Medium Term Financial Plan which details how the Council will deliver a balanced budget over the next three years with associated investment, spend and financial efficiencies.

Resources

- 6.2 The new priorities will act as a clear guide and reference point for decision making on resource allocation.

Legal

- 6.3 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Risk

- 6.4 As part of the Council's governance obligations, a corporate risk management system is in place that will reflect the new Council priorities.

Equalities

- 6.5 A number of Equalities Groups directly participated in the Community Conversation sessions held as part of the community engagement process. Equality across communities was a key theme and has been built into Priority One for the Council, '**Everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer and build sustainable communities**'. This focus will continue, using the Council's Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment (EPIA) as we deliver on the work set out in the Council's Business Plan and reach decisions on the delivery of its projects.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.6 Climate change and sustainability featured in the responses given by communities during the engagement process undertaken to develop the

Council's Priorities. As such, a project will now be driven through the Council's Business Plan to help make the Falkirk Council area a lower carbon and more sustainable place to live. Where necessary, environmental impact assessments will support the major initiatives within our Business Plan.

Conclusions

- 7.1 This report sets out the Council's approach to engagement to establish a new set of Council priorities. These priorities are the foundation of both the Council's Corporate Plan and Business Plan and will act as a clear guide for resource allocation decisions.
- 7.2 The Council will follow through on a commitment to continue with community engagement to shape the direction of travel of the key projects in the Business Plan

Chief Executive

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Date: 30 September 2020

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Falkirk Council's Corporate Plan

List of Background Papers: None

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973: None

FALKIRK COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN 2020 - 2022

Message from the Chief Executive

Trust - the foundation of almost everything we do in life; from the brands we buy to the services we use. Without it, not much can be achieved. If you want to build it, you need to empower those around you and ask, listen, and act in good faith on what they tell you.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we trusted our communities to do more for themselves. In return, they trusted us to provide support when they needed it. As a result, partnerships have been strengthened and new ones formed that continue to help those most in need.

As we look to our recovery, we cannot lose the ground made, nor revert to old habits of 'doing to'. We must continue to build trust with those around us so the right decisions can be made to help the Falkirk Council area become 'The Place to Be'.

The proposal

To make that happen, our Corporate Plan sets out our commitment to ask the right questions, to the right people, at the right time, and, wherever possible act on what we have been told or honestly explain why we are unable to do so. Only by doing this, can we gain the trust needed to underpin positive and lasting change.

But we cannot do this alone. We need our communities, businesses, partners, and employees to continue working with us to create innovative solutions that will help our area thrive against an increasingly difficult financial backdrop.

The budgetary challenges of the next few years also mean hard choices and difficult decisions will need to be made, and we need to be honest about that too.

We will not always get it right first time. There will be bumps in the road. But, by working in partnership, we will have the best opportunity to overcome them and make our communities safer, our town centres more vibrant, our environment cleaner, and our local economy stronger.

Our promise

Our new priorities are the bedrock of this plan. These have been shaped following consultation with communities.

The views from our communities not only gave us helpful insight into what is important to them, they made clear the amount of work that needs to be done to achieve our ambitions for the area.

This plan is more than just words on a page, it is our new way forward. It is our promise to all that we will ask, listen and act on what we are told, wherever we can, to build the trust needed to help our communities and economy recover.

Kenneth Lawrie
Chief Executive

Key Facts

The Falkirk Council area has an estimated population of **160,890**. This is an increase of 550 (0.3%) from 2018 and Falkirk's highest ever population (2020).

13,257 of the population are 75+ and **52,103** are 25-49 (2020).

Households are projected to rise each year to 2041, with single person households the largest type (**36%**) (2018).

The total number of jobs in Falkirk can be rounded to **66,000** (2016).

Enterprise total turnover was **£7,051.6m** (2016).

In 2016, tourism was worth **£110.2m** to the local economy employing almost 2,000 people. The Falkirk area attracted over 930,000 visitors - evidence of continued significant growth.

Around **a third** of all chemical sector activity in Scotland takes place in Falkirk.

COVID-19 – Economic Position

18,800 employees (**29.5%** of total employees in Falkirk) have been furloughed

- Accommodation and Food Services 73%
- Arts and Entertainment 73%,
- Construction 59%
- Manufacturing 40%

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 Council area from 655 (**5.35%**) in March 2020 to 1,250 in June 2020 (**10.1%**).

Our Strategic Plans

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| <p>The Falkirk Plan: Due 2021</p> <p>Will provide a vision and focus, based on agreed local priorities, for communities and partners to work collaboratively to meet the needs and aspirations of people in Falkirk.</p> | 10 Years |
| <p>Falkirk Council Corporate Plan 2020 - 2022</p> <p>Is our vision framework. It focuses on our Council priorities and future engagement with communities.</p> | 2 Years |
| <p>Falkirk Council Business Plan 2021 - 2023</p> <p>Links our Council of the Future change programme to deliver on Council priorities, Medium Term Financial Plan and Workforce Plan.</p> | 3 Years |
| <p>Falkirk Council Economic Recovery Plan August 2020</p> <p>Presents information on the economic impact and outcome of consultation concerning the COVID-19 situation and how we will address this.</p> | 2 Years |
| <p>Digital Falkirk 2020 - 2025</p> <p>Framework for digital to improve services, engage more effectively with our communities, and reduce operational costs.</p> | 5 Years |

Our Communities – Our Priorities

What our Communities have said:

In our [COVID-19 Recovery: Community Engagement Survey](#), people were asked what's important to them. They said:

Enable everyone to fulfil their potential

95.3% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

People in our communities are supported to live their lives well

94.6% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

Enable and empower our communities to live healthier, safer, and more sustainable lives

93.7% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

Help businesses to thrive and make the area more prosperous

93.6% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

Become an innovative and entrepreneurial council, providing effective leadership to help transform outcomes

84.4% of respondents said this was very important or important to them.

Our Vision & Mission

Below we set down our ambition for the Falkirk Council area. It may seem bold, but we believe it is achievable if everyone works together to make it happen.



The Place to Be

- Where everyone can fulfil their potential

Our priorities

They provide a framework to bring our vision and mission to life.

People: **Communities**



This is about: Community Planning Poverty & Equalities Education Social Care Where we Live



We will:

- Work to protect and improve the health & wellbeing of all
- Ask, listen, and act on what our communities tell us
- Cut red tape to make it easier for communities to make decisions for themselves
- Build on new strengths created within our communities
- Work in partnership with communities to ensure decisions and services are right for them
- Form stronger ties with our communities and partners to improve the lives of our most vulnerable
- Raise aspirations and help everyone live independent and fulfilling lives
- Ensure children and young people thrive in their education/training
- Safeguard our green spaces and maintain a transport infrastructure that is sustainable, and fit for purpose
- Ensure people feel safe within their community and live in high-quality housing

Place: **Enterprise**



This is about: **Growth Deal** **Economic Recovery** **Employability** **Inclusive Growth** **Climate Change**



We will:

- Support sustainable economic recovery that benefits everyone
- Use our procurement power to help rebuild the local economy and support sustainable local supply chains
- Create strong partnerships that will help drive growth and regeneration
- Seek external sources of investment to support a diverse economy
- Reimagine our town centres, making them vibrant places to live, meet, eat, shop, and do business
- Support the growth of the low carbon economy to deliver new employment and create a greener environment
- Encourage the use of Electric Vehicles and green transport as well as sources of renewable power for new developments
- Look to capitalise on the environmental and green benefits that arose during lockdown to ensure we meet our carbon reduction targets
- Help people retrain so they can move quickly from one job to another or from a declining sector to an emerging one
- Ensure our most vulnerable can gain skills needed to secure work in an uncertain job market
- Work with young people to develop training that helps them gain the skills needed for jobs of the future

Partnership: **Innovation**



This is about: **Transformation Resources** **Culture** **Digital** **Financials** **Data**



We will:

- Identify new ways of working and service delivery models to help meet the Council's financial challenges and retain new and better ways of working
- Work with employees to build on new working practices (including working from home) to meet their needs and those of our customers
- Encourage and enable collaborative working by providing our workforce with the right tools to make it happen
- Create a 'can-do', supportive working culture that encourages creativity and innovation
- Enable a more digitally focused economy with better digital infrastructure
- Pick up the pace and move more services online, making it easier for customers to access them 24/7, 365 days a year
- Automate services to make it easier to do business with us
- Look at our portfolio of buildings in light of new working practices and engage with the communities, partners and customers on how we use them

Our Culture



We are Responsive:

By embracing technology and modern working practices we will enhance people's lives and use our own data to create services that meet our needs of our customers 24/7, 365 days a year.



We are Innovative:

By celebrating collaboration, creativity and learning we will inspire employees and communities to solve shared problems and create unique services that make Falkirk the place to live, learn, work and visit.



We are Trusted:

By removing bureaucracy and red tape we will enable and empower people to develop new skills and live rewarding and happy lives as independently as possible within their own community.



We are Ambitious:

By never limiting our employees or our communities' aspirations we will create sustainable services that have a positive impact on people's lives.

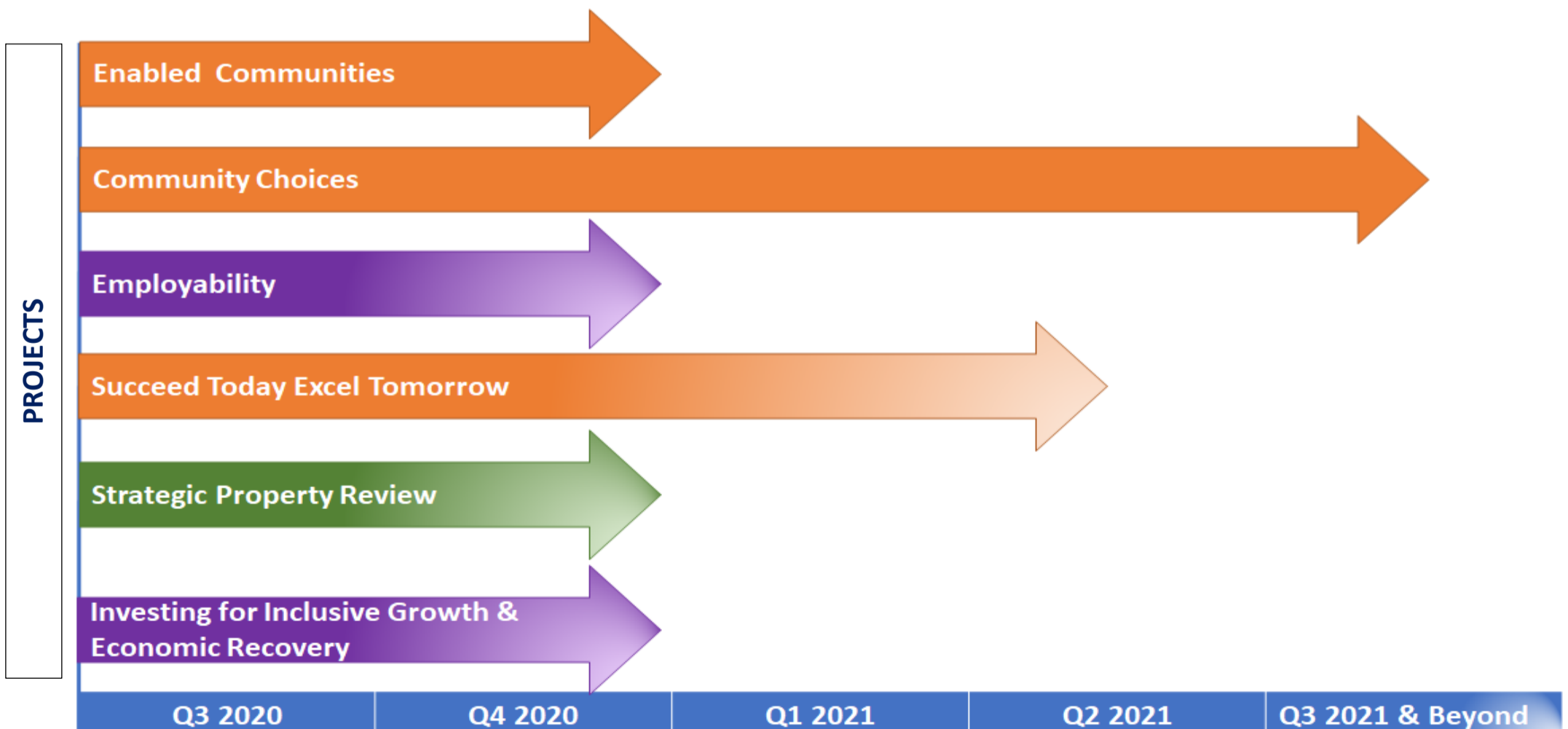
Conversations with our Communities

When we launched our [COVID-19 Recovery: Community Engagement survey](#), we made a pledge to our communities that we would ask, listen and act on what they say to ensure services better meet their needs. What they told us over the summer months helped to shape our priorities. See [Falkirk Council Business Plan](#)

Now we need to continue those conversations to ensure the projects laid down in our Business Plan help deliver on our priorities and the ambitions we all have for the area. Why? Because what our communities tell us is vitally important. Their input will help keep projects moving in the right direction and ensure we make the right decisions.

We'll keep talking in a number of different ways and we'll work with our Third Sector partners and other community groups to gather the views of our citizens.

Here's what we will talk about:



Performance Indicators

A suite of indicators is under development and will be brought forward in the near future.