

COVID-19 RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The impact of the COVID pandemic is seen worldwide and the situation is very much ongoing with increasing incidence and changing restrictions. With any “emergency situation”, it is essential that we consider how we recover from it both at a national and local level.
- 1.2 The Council has a Recovery Strategy and Framework in place which is flexible to adapt and changes to the circumstances of this pandemic. The purpose of this recovery strategy is to outline the process, working with partners and communities, where we can have a planned “**return to normality**”.
- 1.3 The Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan has been developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic response and is submitted to Committee for consideration and approval. This plan details the specific actions and priorities for all agencies, and communities, as we seek to return to the “new norm.” This process is a complex one as we are still in the pandemic response/reset stage, and recovery plans require to be flexible to deal with the impact of further infection and from the evolving Government restrictions that are applied locally.
- 1.4 Finance: There is no specific funding allocated to this but expenditure is closely monitored as part of our ongoing financial arrangements post COVID
- 1.5 **Recommendation:**
 - 1.5.1 That the Policy and Resources Committee consider and approve the Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan which is critical in providing a strong foundation for the future economic and social recovery of Argyll and Bute.

COVID-19 RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The impact of the COVID pandemic is a global issue with significant national and local impacts. The situation is still evolving with increasing incidence globally, nationally and locally with changing restrictions to our normal way of life. With any “emergency situation”, it is essential that we consider how we recover from it both at a national and local level.
- 2.2 The council has a Recovery Strategy and Framework in place which is flexible to enable it to adapt and change to the particular circumstances of this pandemic. The purpose of this recovery strategy is to outline the process that has been developed, working with our partners including multiple public agencies, the third sector and local communities, to ensure a planned **“return to normality”**.
- 2.3 The Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan has been developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic response and is submitted to Committee for their consideration and approval. This plan details the specific actions and priorities for all agencies, and communities, as we continue our journey to the “new norm” albeit we know some things may have to change permanently including how the council delivers future services.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Policy and Resources Committee consider and approve the Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan which is critical in providing a strong foundation for the future economic and social recovery of Argyll and Bute.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 During the initial incident/response phase of the COVID pandemic, the Council developed and agreed its recovery strategy and framework that detailed the process of recovering back to the “new norm” as part of its response. The Framework recognised that the Council had a role to lead

the process, but that it could only be delivered in cooperation with partner agencies, third, private and voluntary sectors, together with our local communities.

4.2 The key elements of the strategy included the:

- Reinstatement of normality in terms of Council and HSCP services, including reopening of buildings
- Continued protection of public health, including reopening of business and activities following closure and subsequent restrictions
- Develop and deliver a proactive and integrated framework for the care for vulnerable in our communities in terms of care, medical treatment and supplies
- Support and encourage Economic wellbeing and recovery support to business and communities
- Reinstatement transport networks as soon as practicable.
- A proactive and integrated framework for communication (public information, employee information, media relationships)
- Maintenance of detailed and audited financial records for all activity, decisions and expenditure.
- The involvement, and co-operation, of the community and all relevant agencies.

4.3 The Recovery Working Group has been established for some time now and has made considerable progress in embedding the strategy and framework. A number of specific thematic groups were established to provide forums for detailed discussions for all involved, and the development of specific and shared priorities and actions. **Appendix 1** illustrates the thematic groups and linkages with the Recovery Working Group.

4.4 Recovery is complicated as we are still within the incident/response/reset phase of the pandemic, with changing restrictions and impacts. There are also concurrent risks associated with EU Exit which add more complexity as well as numerous Government consultations on significant areas of policy that will affect our area together with developing our emerging Rural Growth Deal and economic strategy. In addition our area has had to contend with the ongoing issues around the A83 trunk road reliability. All this activity, much of it out with our control, impacts on the “recovery process” and has been built into the Recovery Working Groups overview.

4.5 A Recovery Action Plan has been developed which outlines the key priorities and actions, and this is attached in **Appendix 2** for consideration by Members. It has been agreed by the Recovery Working Group, although there is sufficient flexibility to continue to adapt and revise the Action Plan as and when the situation develops further. The

Plan therefore provides a focal point and strong foundation that outlining our intentions, supports collective working with our key partners and communities with future progress gauged against this plan.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Recovery Working Group is established and fully operational taking account of our response to the pandemic and ensuring our recovery does not duplicate effort. There is excellent participation and engagement from our partners and mechanisms are now in place to engage with others, including our local communities. Significant progress has been made although the process will take some time to deliver. It is subject to change and will be affected by many factors, including the incidence of infection, restrictions, community feedback and the resources which are collectively available to deliver our future recovery. Formal endorsement of the Action Plan is critical at this stage of the process by the committee with members referred to the content of the recommendation.
- 5.2 Recovery from COVID is complex and likely to be lengthy as we are still in the pandemic response/reset stage, and our plans must therefore be flexible to deal with the impact of further infection and from the evolving restrictions. There are also other concurrent risks (e.g. EU Exit, winter weather, reliability of the A83, availability of vaccine etc.) which will impact on progress and will create further challenges as we continue to move forward. Having this plan and framework in place and agreed will greatly assist this process.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy:	Consistent with Policy and responsibilities of council in category 1 incident.
6.2 Financial	Financial implications are unbudgeted and will be monitored through financial management group.
6.3 Legal	None.
6.4 HR	Implications in terms of work stream to recover and redesign Council services.
6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty	Meets requirements.
6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics	Satisfactory but ongoing monitoring of specific factors is necessary.
6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty	Satisfactory but ongoing monitoring of specific factors is necessary.
6.5.3 Islands	The recovery process applies equally to our island communities which will require agreed actions to take account of any island implications.
6.6 Risk	Risk managed through Strategic Risk register but critical that we deliver this Strategy as Council have

enabling role.
6.7 Customer Service Continued service delivery.

Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Infrastructure Services

Councillor Robin Currie – Leader of the Council

9th November 2020

For further information contact: Fergus Murray/Alan Morrison

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Framework of Recovery Working Group

Appendix 2: Argyll and Bute Recovery Action Plan

Appendix 1: Framework of Recovery Working Group

