ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Report to:	**The Executive**
Date:	**Monday 17th August 2020**
Subject:	**Coronavirus Outbreak Recovery Planning and Delivery Update**
Portfolio Holder(s):	**Council Leader and all Members of the Executive**
Head of Service / Director:	**Annwen Morgan** **Chief Executive**
Report Author: Tel: E-mail:	**Dylan J Williams, Deputy Chief Executive** **01248 752 499** dylanwilliams@ynysmon.gov.uk
Local Members:	**All Elected Members**

A –Recommendation/s and reason/s
Recommendations: a) **Release £200,000 from the Revenue Contributions Unapplied to Capital Expenditure earmarked reserve (current balance £842,917) to fund the cost of developing priority capital schemes and to work towards the securing of additional capital grant funding to implement those schemes.** b) **That 25% of the 2020/2021 travel and subsistence budget is decommitted (£115,420) and reallocated towards immediate recovery activity:** • **Virtual Cyswllt Môn pilot in the Island's libraries** • **Enabling further business process transformation in as quick a timeframe as possible.** • **A new digital system and training package is introduced to improve and enhance contract management monitoring, reporting, and benefits realisation**

1. Introduction

1.1 The Executive agreed internal structures and responsibilities to oversee the County Council's and the Islands further development and recovery from the Coronavirus emergency during its meeting on 13th July 2020. Since the Executive's last meeting, priority and focus has remained on enabling further easing of lockdown restrictions, maintaining the safety of officers and residents, and achieving positive outcomes, whilst collaborating meaningfully with relevant partners and stakeholders.

1.2 It continues to be a challenging and uncertain period for residents, communities and businesses. Further easing requires new safety measures to be utilised/ adhered to, whilst trying to enable residents to interact more socially, businesses to trade more freely, and tourists and second homeowners to visit the Island again. Compliance with safety guidelines, personal responsibility and appropriate behaviours are of paramount importance to ensure new coronavirus cases are minimised and the likelihood of local outbreaks is reduced.

1.3 These activities have been progressed, whilst also considering and planning for a potential second wave of positive cases over coming weeks and months. The challenges and uncertainties make it essential that the benefits of working safely and differently are fully embedded and exploited by the County Council.

2. Purpose

2.1 To update the Executive on local recovery planning and delivery progress and secure support for immediate decisions.

3. Recovery/ Lockdown Easing Overview

3.1 There have been important national changes made by Welsh Government during July and early August to ease lockdown restrictions:

a) 6th July – lifting requirement to stay local (5-mile radius) and outdoor visitor attractions opening
b) 11th July – self-contained accommodation opening
c) 13th July – hairdressers, most indoor attractions, outdoor areas for pubs, bars, cafes and restaurants opening
d) 20th July - playgrounds and community centers opening
e) 25th July - accommodation with shared facilities (campsites, hostels, and hotels) opening
f) 27th July – beauty salons, tattoo studios, indoor cinemas, galleries, and the housing market fully opening
g) 3rd August - indoor areas of pubs, cafes, bars and restaurants opening
h) 10th August – indoor leisure facilities opening

3.2 In response, the County Council has taken several local decisions to ensure compliance and enable the organisation, officers, residents, and local businesses to move into the 'next normal' safely and effectively:

a) 2nd July - Gwalchmai Recycling Centre opening with pre booking system
b) 6th July – 7 public footpaths and all Council coastal car parks opening, with 'click and collect' service commencing at Holyhead and Llangefni libraries
c) 13th July - Anglesey schools opening for 1-week period as part of the Welsh Government's "Check in, Catch Up, Prepare for summer and September" plans
d) 13th July – 7 unstaffed coastal slipways and 3 staffed coastal slipways opening, together with public toilets and home delivery library service for housebound individuals
e) 20th July - Council's Head Quarters and the Business Centre being able to safely accommodate increased numbers of staff who were unable to work from home (majority of office-based staff continued to work from home)
f) 21st July - click and collect service commencing at Amlwch and Menai Bridge libraries
g) 24th July - click and collect service commencing at Benllech and Beaumaris libraries
h) 27th July - click and collect Service commences at Rhosneigr Library
i) 5th August – phased opening of Oriel Mon commenced
j) 11th August – phased opening of leisure centres commencing

4. Regional Recovery Progress

4.1 The final terms of reference for the North Wales Recovery Coordination Group (RCG) have been agreed, with the aim of coordinating the development and implementation of a regional recovery strategy. The North Wales emergency response Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) role is being reduced, with the RCG providing the structure and means to ensure all partners can plan and deliver recovery activities effectively.

4.2 The SCG will be stood-up again if the need arises, especially if the level of local outbreaks increases, or there is an increased likelihood of a second wave arriving in North Wales.

4.3 As part of the regional coordination efforts, County Council Officers have also been collaborating to influence and inform the preparation process for a regional economic recovery plan. This work is being coordinated by North Wales Economic Ambition Board officers, in partnership with Welsh Government officials. It is expected that a draft plan will be in place for consideration by the RGC and partner organisations in early September. A regional review of the emergency periods impact on the visitor economy has also been commissioned.

4.4 The North Wales Social Care and Wellbeing Services Improvement Collaborative has established a Health and Social Care Recovery Group which involves Social Services Directors and Senior Officials from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. The purpose of the group is to co-ordinate the recovery programme for health and social care. The immediate priority will be considering and planning for winter pressures, the backlog of routine health work (created by prioritising Covid–19 cases in hospitals), and a potential winter resurgence of Covid-19.

4.5 The work on community resilience recovery is being coordinated through the Public Service Board (Gwynedd and Anglesey). Planning and preparation for a workshop in early September is progressing, with the aim of agreeing priority intervention areas. The focus will be on identifying where and how the Board can add value to local and individual interventions being progressed by different partner organisations.

4.6 The County Council is also proactively collaborating through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to influence and inform potential National recovery programmes and interventions that the Welsh Government could introduce and fund (to be implemented by local authorities).

5. Local Recovery Progress

5.1 The County Council has focused on immediate actions to facilitate and support local recovery, whilst also looking longer term (to align, influence and inform the steps outlined above at regional and national level). Draft recovery action plans are in preparation from an economic, destination, and social/ community services perspective.

5.2 The draft local economic recovery plan has been considered by the Service Transformation Programme Board (Thursday 6th August) and the Corporate Governance Programme Board (Friday 7th August). In addition, details of potential capital schemes that would support recovery have been collated and shared with the WLGA to try and influence and ensure the amount of capital funding received from Welsh Government increases.

5.3 Recent activity to support businesses and stimulate the local economy can be summarised as:

a) £25,000 has been distributed to 5 North Anglesey businesses as part of the NDA funded North Anglesey Regeneration Plan
b) £13,000 has been distributed to 3 local businesses through the Arfor programme
c) 40 local businesses have been supported by administrating the Welsh Government's "Start Up" grants
d) 450 potential applicants for NDR grant support have been contacted and advised
e) Welsh Government EZ funding has been secured for studies to further develop potential additional phases for existing sites and premises schemes in Llangefni and Holyhead

f) £628,000 secured from Welsh Government for flood defence schemes that will be delivered through local contractors

g) £143,000 secured from Welsh Government to increase walking, biking, and ensure social distancing measures are in place that will be delivered through local contractors

5.4 The destination recovery plan remains in development. Activity over recent weeks has focused upon:

a) The rediscover Anglesey Safely campaign (digital, in the press, and in key locations)
b) Publicising and raising awareness of safe and respectful actions and behaviours
c) Managing the safe progression of Beaumaris Pier painting project
d) Developed a new rubbish reduction campaign
e) Re launched the visit Anglesey website and updating content to reflect open attractions and businesses
f) Social Media publicity being rolled out
g) Engaged with the ATA to share information and understand their priorities and concerns/ challenges

5.5 The Social & Community Services recovery plan remains in development. Activity over recent weeks has focused upon:

a) Completing home visits and assessments virtually
b) Undertaking virtual training
c) Undertaking maintenance work required by tenants in their homes.
d) Increasing the number of lettings made to reduce the number of individuals housed in emergency accommodation
e) Reducing community support as residents can do more for themselves safely
f) Introducing new software to focus on reducing tenants rent arrears where possible
g) Re-starting tenant participation activities and open community spaces

5.6 From the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the County Council's Social Services team, in collaboration with other officers and organisations, across the two departments have worked tirelessly to safeguard the most vulnerable residents. Staff have worked 7 days a week, 24 hours a day to respond and support COVID-19 breakouts. As referrals in both Children and Families and Adults Services return to their usual rate capacity is being created in both service areas to manage this. Planning also continues for the Winter in Anglesey's Residential Homes, and the potential for a second peak.

5.7 The County Council continues to collaborate and deliver in relation to the local Track, Trace and Protect Strategy (TTP). This is critical to minimise new cases, stop potential, and control local outbreaks. Demands have recently been small, due to the low volume of new cases. Current capacity is maintained via the commitment of existing County Council officers, whilst the regional recruitment process to create dedicated capacity within each of the six local authorities continues (with Flintshire Council leading). The County Council continues to lobby and press for more certainty and consistency in test results turnaround time, which informs the TTP activity which is undertaken.

5.8 The recent factory outbreak in Llangefni was effectively ended, with no evidence of widespread community transmission beyond the factory workforce. Monitoring continues. From an environmental health perspective, the small team of professionals also undertake a combination of proactive and reactive (enforcement) measures to maintain public health, confidence, ensure compliance with guidance and legislation, and reduce the risks of further outbreaks:

a) Provided advice and guidance to all care homes on all issues related to the prevention and management of COVID infections.
b) Provide guidance to Social services on how social bubbles can be established and maintained safely for vulnerable residents.
c) Letters and emails have been sent to all pubs and restaurants (over 400 premises) with advice and signposting to information on how to open and operate safely.
d) Letters and emails have been sent to hairdressers and beauticians (over 140 establishments) with advice and signposting to information on how to open and operate safely.
e) Preparing advice circular for licensed taxi trade on face coverings.
f) Reviewed risk assessments for those providing summer childcare provision.
g) Reviewed risk assessments and provide advice when requested from businesses.
h) Undertaken monitoring inspections of licensed premises (pubs).
i) Proactive intelligence led inspections of licensed premises with North Wales
j) Reactive inspections of licensed premises when intelligence has been received.
k) Compliance notice served on a licensed premise for breaching the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) No2 (Wales) Regulations 2020 as amended (COVID-19 regulations).

6. Organisational Development to Work Differently

6.1 The importance of working differently, and embedding positive changes into the County Council's processes, behaviours and values has also been progressed. A reflect and learn exercise (to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) of how the emergency period has bene managed was undertaken by members of the Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Service, and function managers. In addition, a working from home digital survey was completed by 897 staff members. The results are currently being analysed and are informing the organisational development priorities and action plan to work differently as part of the 'next normal'.

6.2 Key emerging themes to work differently (subject to further change and development) can be summarised as:

   a) Capitalising fully on the opportunities provided by Information Technology
   b) Mainstreaming and building upon the environmental, climate and decarbonisation benefits
   c) Enhancing thematic working across the structure, services, functions, and teams
   d) Improving efficiency by reducing travel times and manual office processes
   e) Achieving a better balance between office/ home working, and well-being benefits for officers, whilst tackling loneliness and isolation for some officers who live alone
   f) Increasing ability of officers to adapt and change with skills, capabilities and behaviours (which are critical for the next normal)
   g) Maintaining and improving equality, service accessibility and customer care

7. Local Economic Recovery

7.1 <u>Town Centre Recovery</u>

7.1.1 Supporting and enabling the safe return of residents and visitors to the Island's five town centres is an immediate priority. Actions must contribute to increasing overall confidence levels to enable more people to return to town centres safely and support small businesses. Town centres is also a recognised priority for Welsh Government with considerable regional collaboration. To support recovery the Welsh Government has repurposed some of the Targeted Regeneration Investment (TRI) Programme with a capital grant of £108,000. This funding will be used to:

   a) Deliver a consistent, clear and branded signage strategy reminding people to stay safe when visiting (aligned to the Visit Wales "Rediscovering Anglesey" brand). The signage strategy will follow a simple template, influencing behaviours to keep everyone safe (and retain confidence levels).

b) A financial contribution to each eligible Town Council to support their efforts to create a safe environment and attract people back. Measures should make residents and visitors feel safe, whilst creating a welcoming and friendly environment that enbales businesses to operate safely.

c) Explore the possibility of a new digital technology to improve safety and the visitor experience.

7.2 Development of New Capital Schemes

7.2.1 Several of the County Council's potential capital schemes could be externally funded as part of the local green economic recovery. Welsh Government are considering which schemes across the country could be supported and delivered without delay. These could benefit the Island, economy, businesses, communities and the County Council in the short and long term. However, to take full advantage the schemes must be fully developed and 'shovel ready'. Additional resource and capacity are required to enable the agreed priority schemes to be progressed in terms of design, costs, benefits, and consents. Without this additional investment the County Council and the Island will not be able to take full advantage of capital grant funding opportunities from Welsh Government in key thematic areas which are aligned with the Corporate Plan such as:

* construction of new council houses.
* new EV Park and Share facilities and EV charging points at strategic tourism locations.
* green infrastructure to encourage behavioural change.
* construction of new business units in response to local needs.
* improving physical health and well-being facilities.
* capitalise upon the economic, social and cultural value of tourism.

7.3 Contract Management

7.3.1 The County Council is committed to assist local business to sub-contract or contract directly with the Authority. Work is underway to prepare a 'Contract Management Handbook', with tools and information. This should be supplemented with effective training, advice and support. A digital system is also necessary to enable effective and consistent contract management, monitoring, and reporting. Welsh Government is working with Social Value portal to create a benefits/ outcomes measurements system which is aligned with the 7 Wellbeing and Future Generation Act themes. Work is already underway to consider how corporate monitoring and reporting can be improved. These steps would contribute towards ensuring that greater local benefits can be realised through contracts.

8. Change to the Authority's way of Working

8.1 <u>Cyswllt Môn</u>

8.1.1 The adaptations and change in approach to protect the workforce, residents, and maintain service provision needs to be reviewed in terms of the future front of house Cyswllt Môn. There are opportunities to adapt the current operating model and pilot different approaches, whilst maintaining the core service provison that is provided from the main Council offices in Llangefni. The aim will be to maintain equality of access, customer care standards, safety, be inclusive and reduce the need to travel. This will be to pilot multi-channel contact arrangements, utilising facilities in the community, promote digital channels, and ensure "access to all".

8.1.2 The County Council is committed to equality of opportunity and accessibility, and the pilot would inform future decisions on how community facilities could act as hubs/ gateways to virtual engagement, information sharing and communication with residents who do not have their own personal devices or connectivity. This pilot would enable residents to book a time slot to attend a library and meet virtually with a member of the Cyswllt Môn Team without the need for travel. Should this be successful, then roll out to different Services will be progressed.

8.2 <u>Organisational Design and culture (Working Differently)</u>

8.2.1 Over the past 3 years the Council has undertaken several projects to change the way the Council works, both internally but also how it deals with its customers. Projects that have resulted in operational changes have included the CRM project, Northgate HR / Payroll project, improvements to the Planning system, enabling customers to pay for Council services via the internet, integration of Housing Benefit forms directly into the back office system, introduction of document workflow in Planning and Revenues and Benefits. All these changes have improved processing times and released staff from undertaking paper-based administration.

8.2.2 Software vendors are also introducing a new generation of software which offers increased level of automation, focusing on workflows to make processes more efficient. However, in return vendors are looking for customers to move to an application that is paid for on a subscription basis which are hosted in the cloud rather than on the physical servers run by the Council. These types of arrangements are more costly than the traditional licensing costs, but they do generate savings for the Authority in terms of the cost of supporting physical servers and the energy consumed in running the servers. More work needs to be done to consider the advantages and disadvantages of using more cloud-based software, but it is an opportunity to change the Council's business processes and contributes to reducing the Council's carbon footprint.

8.2.3 There is also an opportunity to deliver more change now with the introduction of additional resource. The additional resource could be used to increase the introduction of more services which can be provided to customers using the CRM. This would quickly have an impact on the number of paper-based systems which operate within the Council and allow customers to access more of the Council's services without the need to come to the Council offices. This is just one example but there may be other areas which may also benefit from the additional resource.

8.2.4 The Business Process Transformation Group, chaired by the Head of Transformation, is monitoring and controlling the work to improve the Council's business processes and it is anticipated that this Group will continue this work including the monitoring and reporting on the use of any additional funding provided and the benefits realised. The Business Process Transformation Group reports to the Corporate Transformation Board.

9. Travel and Subsistence Budget (2020/2021)

9.1.1 Council staff who use their own private vehicles to travel on Council business are entitled to claim car allowances for the mileage undertaken in accordance with the Council's agreed scheme. The budget to fund these costs is held within individual service budgets. The pandemic and subsequent lockdown has forced the Council to operate virtually which provides an opportunity for both one off savings (2020/21 only) but also permanent savings. Over the past 4 months, all non-essential visits have stopped, and services have been able to continue with a level of service by carrying the work by means of telephone and video calls, obtaining evidence by means of photographs and undertaking virtual inspections.

9.2.2 For 2020/2021 the total car allowance budget is £665,200 and the subsistence budget is £23,250. Deducting grant funded budgets, school's delegated budget and the Housing Revenue Account budget reduces these figures to £591,260 for car allowances and £21,760 for subsistence. Budgets for essential travel for home carers and foster carers should also be discounted as these services have continued during the period of the lockdown. This further reduces the budgets to £439,920 for car allowances and £21,760 for subsistence.

9.3.3 Comparing these budgets to the actual expenditure to the end of the first quarter shows that only 10.7% of the adjusted car allowances budget and 2.9% of the adjusted subsistence budget was spent during the first quarter. If some level of normality resumes from the second quarter onwards, there is likely to be a significant underspend. It is therefore proposed to reduce these budgets by 25% with the funds generated being used to fund other recovery work in 2020/21. This will create a fund of £115,420.

9.3.4	All car allowance budgets will be reviewed as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22 in order to contribute to the overall savings target.

B – What other options did you consider and why did you reject them and/or opt for this option?

C – Why is this a decision for the Executive?

Recovery issues and reallocation of agreed budgets in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 emergency

CH – Is this decision consistent with policy approved by the full Council?

Yes

D – Is this decision within the budget approved by the Council?

Yes – but with some reallocations form the agreed budget codes.

E – Impact on our Future Generations (if relevant)		
1	**How does this decision impact on our long-term needs as an Island**	The proposed recommendations respond to the immediate needs and opportunities, whilst hopefully strengthening the foundation and ability to respond to future challenges and opportunities (as a direct result of the COVID-19 emergency).
2	**Is this a decision which it is envisaged will prevent future costs / dependencies on the Authority? If so, how:**	Yes – the activities that would be progressed could enable more efficient, equal, and modern service provision to meet local needs.
3	**Have we been working collaboratively with other organisations to come to this decision, if so, please advise whom?**	The County Council has been collaborating regionally and locally to ensure its proposals are informed by local needs and opportunities.

4	Have Anglesey citizens played a part in drafting this way forward? Please explain how:	
5	Outline what impact does this decision have on the Equalities agenda and the Welsh language	To maintain and improve service provision during the recovery period, equality of opportunity and bilingual information/ services will remain of critical importance.

DD – Who did you consult?		What did they say?
1	Chief Executive / Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (mandatory)	Proposals utilised to inform and influence the scope and nature of the final report
2	Finance / Section 151 (mandatory)	Supportive of the recommendations
3	Legal / Monitoring Officer (mandatory)	Supportive of the recommendations
4	Human Resources (HR)	Supportive of the recommendations
5	Property	
6	Information Communication Technology (ICT)	Supportive of the recommendations
7	Procurement	Supportive of the recommendations
8	Scrutiny	
9	Local Members	

F - Appendices:

FF - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):
The Executive – Coronavirus Outbreak Early Recovery Planning (meeting onMonday 13th July 2020)