

**Pembrokeshire County Council**



**Corporate Plan**

**2020-21**

## Foreword from Leader

I am pleased to introduce the Corporate Plan which looks forward to how we will meet the challenges that we will face in the future.

The context for this year's Plan is completely unprecedented. No one who is a Member of, or works for the Council has encountered a challenge to public health on the scale or gravity as COVID-19. But yet we have risen to this challenge and in partnership with our communities and other organisations have achieved some extra-ordinary feats.

It is only 180 days from the date of this Cabinet to when the Council announced that schools would close in March 2020. There will be reports in the future that document how we have protected lives by engaging our communities in first closing and then gradually re-opening services. From the perspective of six months what strikes me most is the way in which we have pulled our organisation and community together with a single purpose.

Before COVID, my Cabinet had established a clear agenda through the Programme for Administration and the Council was making good progress on it, though the recent Estyn Inspection underlines why improving education – making Pembrokeshire a great place to learn live and grow – must remain our top priority. Whilst the response and recovery to COVID-19 must be our most urgent priority, delivering the Programme for Administration remains our key priority. I am confident that one of the legacies of COVID-19 will be learning from the crisis. We will complete our organisation's transformation journey. We will make the most of technology and the opportunities of digital communication. There will be a new organisational culture that captures the purpose and drive of our response to COVID, learns and delivers results for all our residents. Our relationships with communities will go from strength to strength building on social capital and the kindness that our communities have shown.

None of this is possible without resources. I cannot predict precisely how COVID-19 will impact on our finances, but there is every chance that it will require us to make further efficiencies in future. I am confident that, just as the Council has managed a decade of austerity whilst protecting front line services and the vulnerable as much as possible, we will continue to do so in future.

Our future plans face many uncertainties, but however the rest of the year plays out, I know that this Council will act in a careful manner so as not to jeopardise public health. We will not be complacent and will work tirelessly to engage with communities to ensure social distancing is respected.

Last but not least, I would like to record my thanks to our out-going Chief Executive, Ian Westley, who will be leaving us in a short time. We have worked together for many years and weathered the COVID-19 storm together. I wish him well for the future.

**Cllr David Simpson**

**Leader of the Council**

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## Statement of regulatory purpose

This plan discharges our duty under the Section 9 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to set and publish well-being objectives. This plan also discharges our duties under Part 1 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 to secure continuous improvement.

We anticipate that during 2020-21, the Senedd will consider the Welsh Government's Local Government Bill. If enacted, this will modernise how we publish our priorities, report our performance and remain accountable to residents and other stakeholders and will repeal the 2009 Measure.

We are always keen to hear your views. If you have any feedback on this plan or would like to inform the development of future well-being objectives, please contact us using the details provided below.

You can track our recent performance against this plan by looking at integrated performance management reports that go to both Cabinet and our Overview and Scrutiny Committees on a quarterly basis.

For a copy of this document in **large print, Braille, audio tape, easy read** or an **alternative language**, or for further information please contact:

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## Context for the Corporate Plan

This section sets the strategic context for the Corporate Plan. This context for 2020/21 is very different due to the need to continue to respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

### Relationship to COVID-19 recovery plan

COVID 19 is leading to an unprecedented series of changes on how we live our lives and how services are delivered. COVID-19 and the need to save lives has rightly been centre stage, and the consequential social and economic impacts will need to be considered as part of the recovery of the Pembrokeshire and Pembrokeshire County Council as an organisation. Whilst infection rates have fallen in Wales since their peak, it is clear that across the globe, infection rates for COVID 19 are increasing. There is no room for complacency and there is a very real risk of a second rise in infection rates. Against this backdrop, our usual business planning processes have to operate very differently; our primary objective remains ensuring the long term safety, support and well-being of our communities, especially for the most vulnerable.

Council adopted a Strategic Recovery Plan at its 16 July 2020 meeting. The Plan differentiates between the response phase to COVID 19 and the recovery phase which will first run in parallel with it. It is not possible to set a hard and fast timescale for this transition both response and recovery plans must take precedence in the short term over the Corporate Plan. Cabinet's "Principles for Recovery from the COVID 19 Crisis" both reinforce these objectives and map out how the balance between rapid decision making and democratic control will be maintained.

### Objectives in support of the Recovery Programme

- Ensuring the long term safety, support and well-being of our communities, especially for the most vulnerable.
- Provide a lawful and effective response to recovery that delivers compliance, and provides confidence and reassurance.
- Restoration of patterns of life as close to normal as possible, for as many people as possible, and as quickly and equitably as possible.
- Development of a county of resilient, resourceful and thriving communities and businesses, building on the social capital and delivery of 'kindness' in our communities illustrated during the pandemic.
- Co-ordinate the wider recovery among responding agencies and the Council to align itself with National recovery arrangements.
- Lobby to influence National recovery arrangements and associated Government policy and guidance.
- Restore the continuation of learning and related education services for all.
- Support the shaping and rebuilding of the Pembrokeshire economy by working with individuals and businesses to take advantage of potential opportunities and mitigate threats.
- Realignment of key strategic organisational objectives, priorities and policies to the "new world reality".

- Development of a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that is adaptable to the phases of response – incident (crisis), recovery and steady state.
- Enhance digital connectivity and understanding across the County, and use Information Communications Technology to encourage the move away from traditional interactions.
- Development of a resilient, sustainable, safe, modern and efficient organisation, aware of future challenges and the capability to respond accordingly.
- A well-trained, highly agile, flexible and multi-disciplinary work force with the capabilities and values to meet future challenges and needs of the organisation within a culture based on learning, purpose and results.
- Maintain transparency and confidence by ensuring all decisions, actions, options and rationale are accurately and timely recorded.

### **Programme for Administration**

The Programme for Administration is currently being updated. Cabinet has indicated that it considers the direction of travel it set out in April 2018 is still relevant up until the next Council elections in May 2022.

### **Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations**

In February 2020, the Local Government Association, supported by the Welsh Local Government Association and a team of experienced senior officers and members undertook a Corporate Peer Challenge. The objective of this was to give greater insight into how the Authority can improve through an assessment of its leadership, governance, resources and capacity. The results of the Peer Challenge were considered by Cabinet at its meeting in May 2020.

The Peer Challenge made twelve recommendations that range from how we work with communities, through to improving corporate processes, relationships at the senior leadership level and how we are undertaking transformation, including communication. An action plan is being developed to address these recommendations and updates will be presented to Cabinet.

We anticipate that we will be required to undertake a “Panel Assessment” as part of proposals in the Local Government Bill and the Corporate Peer Challenge has given us valuable experience of how this can be achieved/taken forward.

### **Progressing transformation programme**

The COVID-19 crisis has changed the way that the Council works and has accelerated existing trends towards greater smarter working, a greater use of digital working and changes to the organisational culture.

## Long term trends

Whilst COVID-19 continues to disrupt and change how people live their lives and how services are delivered, many existing long term trends continue. In many cases COVID 19 has intensified and accelerated these trends rather than reversed them. A particular challenge is that this includes widening inequalities.

We maintain a watching brief on long term trends as part of meeting our duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act. By understanding these trends we can make the most of opportunities as well as put preventative measures in place to guard against future challenges.

### Population

- Pembrokeshire's population has grown more slowly than many other areas across the UK. However, growth rates between 2018 and 2019 were faster than in previous years.
- It is possible that COVID-19 will result in a paradigm shift in future population growth rates in urban and rural areas with more people moving to rural areas as home working becomes much more common.
- Pre COVID-19, increases in life expectancy in Wales had stalled. Life expectancy is no longer increasing in many developed countries.  
<http://www.publichealthwalesobservatory.wales.nhs.uk/life-expectancy-mortality-in-wales-2020>
- Pembrokeshire's population is still expected to continue to age with an increasingly large proportion of people in the oldest age brackets. This is likely to drive demand for social care.
- Inequalities in health have increased a little with a slight widening of mortality rates between deprivation quintiles. COVID-19, including the unintended consequences of the lock-down, is likely to exacerbate this trend.

### Response to population change trends

- In the short term we can expect an increase in demand for reablement and we have taken steps to secure additional places in the short term and also have medium/long term plans.
- Population trends are built into the Deposit LDP. The estimate of future growth used reflects the Plan's vision and is consistent with a faster growing population.

### Health

- Opportunities through improvements in medical technology for both treatment as well as improving access to health services in rural areas.
- There is a much greater recognition of the mental health and well-being agenda by public bodies and a much higher profile of support organisations within the community. However, the Future Generations Commissioner has noted "The prevention agenda is not progressing at the scale and pace needed and is not focused on the wider determinants of health"
- Planned operations have been paused as a result of COVID-19. It is likely that some people will have also put off seeking medical advice / getting an early diagnosis of

medical problems. Whilst at this point in time we can only speculate and look to previous pandemics as a guide, it is likely that this pause in usual preventative medical services will result in increased ill-health and chronic conditions.

- Whilst the number of people who have contracted COVID-19 to date has, thankfully, been low, it is now clear that the small proportion of people who experience severe symptoms are at risk of long term damage from the disease.

#### Response to health trends

- The Health board is likely to continue to use video conferencing technology to speed up consultations. This has the potential to make it easier for people in rural areas to access health care.
- The Council has set up a Track, Trace and Protect team to manage the risk of COVID 19 spreading in the community.
- Getting more people more active more often is embedded in the Leisure Strategy and this is being backed up with capital investment. PCC has been awarded £1.2m Active Travel grant for this year.
- We continue to publish a three-yearly Play Sufficiency Action Plan and annual updates and details are available on our website. Access to Play contributes to children's health and emotional well-being.

#### Jobs, Economy and retail

- The full impact of COVID-19 on the economy is still not clear. In the short term there will be a sharp contraction across the local economy. The Office for National Statistics reported a 20.4% contraction of the economy in the second quarter of 2020 and its GDP estimates for June show that the UK economy is now 17.2% smaller than it was in February. The Bank of England expects that the economy will continue to recover throughout 2021, reaching about the same size as it was pre-COVID at the end of 2021.
- Brick and Mortar retail shops face considerable challenges. Pre-COVID, Class A retail vacancies had increased in almost all of Pembrokeshire's towns with vacancy rates above 20% in Haverfordwest, Pembroke Dock, and Milford Haven and a rate of 19% in Fishguard. COVID-19 has exacerbated problems with greatly reduced footfall and greater competition from on-line retailers. Challenges are not just confined to town centres and there is an increasing trend of vacancies in out-of-town retail outlets.
- The value of on-line sales in the UK pre-COVID was already high compared with other European countries. Between February and June 2020 the ONS found the proportion of online spending increased from 20.0% to 31.8%. On-line grocery business OCADO grew by almost 50% in a quarter, enabling it to achieve market growth in a matter of months that it expected would take years to achieve.
- Across the economy, there has been a rise in home-working and the use of technology to connect work colleagues together. This has the potential to lead to changes in where people work and live – less office space within cities and more people working mostly from home and prepared to live at much greater distances, going into an office space on an occasional basis.
- The nature of work is changing and in future it is likely that there will be much greater automation in white collar jobs – Penfro the Chatbot is an example.

- In the medium and longer term it is probable that COVID-19 will accelerate existing trends such as a growth in low carbon industries. Longer term economic prospects are also likely to be influenced by trade deals following Brexit in January 2020.
- It is likely that there will be a substantial rise in unemployment. The Furlough scheme has protected jobs but will phase out by the end of October 2020, adding further pressure for increased unemployment. Pembrokeshire's Claimant Count rate doubled between March 2020 and June 2020 and is likely to rise further throughout the year. The end of the Furlough scheme is likely to be significant – as of August the take up rate was 34% of eligible employments, the fourth highest rate in Wales.
- Low pay (as measured by the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings) is a widespread problem in Pembrokeshire and wage rates are consistently below the lower quartile for authorities across the UK.

#### Response to economy trends

- An Economic Recovery Strategy has been written and the key elements of this are reproduced in this Plan. This is structured around four broad priorities: Tourism; Business; Place; Community supported by three cross-cutting themes, Infrastructure (Broadband); Skills & Employability and Climate Emergency.
- The Council has distributed business support grants with over £50m paid out by the beginning of July to businesses meeting the main Welsh Government Business Grants, with further grants available to micro-businesses as well as Café Culture Grants to support the hospitality sector in town centres adapt to COVID-19.

#### Climate Change

- Over the past year, there has been evidence that the pace of climate change is increasing along with an increased impact on human activity. Examples include estimates for how quickly global sea levels are rising (estimated to be 3mm a year, but some estimates are closer to 5mm) and an increase in extreme weather across the globe.
- The next UK Government Climate Change Risk Assessment is due to be published in 2022. The evidence report is due to be published in summer 2021. This will provide peer reviewed data on the threat posed by climate change.
- Wales has a target of meeting 70% of its energy consumption from renewable sources by 2030. This will bring environmental benefits but it also provides an opportunity for areas such as Pembrokeshire that have untapped potential for generating renewable energy (particularly marine renewables).
- In previous global recessions, such as the one that followed the banking crisis, carbon emissions rose as the economies started to recover as countries prioritised cheaper kinds of fossil fuels in order to keep the price of energy low. Whilst this remains a risk, improving technology has dramatically reduced the cost of renewable energy.

#### Response to climate change trends

- Declaration of a climate change emergency and working group set up to look at how Pembrokeshire can radically reduce its carbon footprint
- Low carbon is a key part of future economic plans. An example is Pembroke Dock Marine where Pembrokeshire County Council was successful in leading a £2m Challenge bid for the Milford Haven: Energy Kingdom project in February 2020. This

aims to accelerate the transition to an integrated hydrogen and renewable energy system, linked to the cluster of major energy infrastructure along the Milford Haven Waterway. Another example, also linked to the Swansea Bay City Deal, is the Homes as Power Stations project.

- A Growing interest in local / sustainably produced food. Some groups have seen the COVID 19 crisis as strengthening the case for developing more resilient and more local food networks.

## Housing

- Continued need for affordable housing. During 2019-20 average house prices (for all properties) in Pembrokeshire increased from £170k to £182k. The equivalent figures for England and Wales are £245k to £248k. As lockdown has ended, there has been strong demand for housing in Pembrokeshire. This has been replicated in many other areas and further data will be needed to see whether this increase house prices and sales will be sustained.
- Housing will play a part in decarbonisation. Better insulation, Passivhaus standards, different construction methods and solar panels have the potential to dramatically reduce net energy consumption.
- The Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2019 identifies that 10% of homes built to Lifetime Homes standards will be required by 2033 reflecting the higher number of disabled people expected by this date.
- Making better use of the housing stock also contributes to tackling affordable housing. This includes discouraging high numbers of second homes especially in coastal areas and encouraging empty homes to be returned to use.
- The COVID 19 crisis has focussed attention on the most acute form of homelessness, rough sleeping. Although numbers were small, the number of rough sleepers has increased in recent years.

## Response to housing trends

- Population trends are translated into additional housing requirements by the Deposit LDP. In order to meet the Plan's vision, 425 new homes a year are planned, about double the figure from Welsh Government 2014 (Rebased) population projection scenarios.
- The Housing Revenue Account Business plan assumes 390 new council housing units will be delivered over the next five years.
- The Second Homes Council Tax premium is set at 50% along with a premium on homes that have been empty for more than 3 years. Funding raised from the Second Homes Council Tax premium is divided 50%/50% between the Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant and funding affordable housing. Cabinet has earmarked these affordable housing resources for a Community Land Trust project in Solva.

## Our priorities

We have revised the working of our priorities to achieve a closer fit with the wording in the Programme for Administration. We have also taken the opportunity to re-word our Education objective to reflect central findings of the 2019 Local Education Authority Estyn inspection and our new Education Strategy - Pembrokeshire a great place to learn, live and grow. The table below compares 2019-20 and 2020-21 well-being objectives.

<b>2019-20 Well-being Objective</b>	<b>2020-21 Well-being Objective</b>
Continue to improve education outcomes so that every child achieves and contributes more than they thought possible.	Education: Pembrokeshire a great place to learn, live and grow.
We will continue to focus on prevention: helping people to stay in control of their own lives rather than becoming dependent on social services.	Social Care: We will do whatever we can to support people in leading the best life they can whilst focusing on prevention and ensuring vulnerable people are safe.
To make Pembrokeshire economically competitive, productive and prosperous, a great place to visit, live and work.	Economic: We will work with partners to promote Pembrokeshire as a great place to visit, live and work.
Provide good quality housing to provide security, wellbeing and quality of life for the residents of Pembrokeshire.	Housing: Enable affordable, decent, and adaptable homes for all in sustainable locations.
We will promote pride in Pembrokeshire seeking to enhance its reputation as a place for exceptional environmental quality.	We will promote pride in Pembrokeshire seeking to enhance its reputation as a place for exceptional environmental quality.
Transformation: Technology; Culture and Relationship.	Transformation: Technology; Culture and Relationship.

## Pembrokeshire a great place to learn, live and grow

This Plan introduces the key elements that will be in our new Education strategy *Pembrokeshire a great place to learn, live and grow*. Those students who are entitled to free school meals, are vulnerable, or have additional learning needs will have faced additional challenges to progressing their education during lockdown. Prioritising emotional wellbeing is essential for successful adaptation to the 'new normal'. Closing the attainment gap and ensuring emotional well-being is high are key features of our new strategy, the timescale of which also covers the implementation of the new curriculum. Strategy aside, we have immediate priorities as a result of COVID-19. We want to ensure that the phased return to schools for all pupils that commenced in June 2019 will be safe for both students and the school workforce. There will be a transition to a new normal for learning; not a simple task as school buildings are not designed for social distancing.

Most young people have been undertaking the vast majority of their learning at home up until July 2020 and a blended learning approach of on-line and face to face will be used from September 2020. It is possible that a resurgence of COVID-19 will result in further disruption to schools and we have worked with Governing Bodies to implement Welsh Government guidance to group students into bubbles. This will help keep students safe whilst minimising disruption.

Another challenge we face is the likely dissolution of ERW, the Education Improvement Consortium that covers mid and West Wales. One of the consortium members has already left, and other authorities have given notice to leave at the end of 2020-21. In time, it is likely that ERW would have been replaced by another structure called a Corporate Joint Committee which will work on a regional basis. On a more positive note, work continues on our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools programme, such as the new Haverfordwest High school building.

For many children and young people Pembrokeshire is a great place to grow up. Educational provision and learner achievement are both improving, and this council offers a wealth of opportunities in sports, leisure and culture. However, our performance remains too variable. We need to continue the focus on addressing inequality in achievement, participation and progression, which for certain groups of young people remains too low in Pembrokeshire. Through 'Pembrokeshire 2027 our vision for education and learning in Pembrokeshire' we will transform our education system and deliver our commitment that every child in Pembrokeshire attends a good school.

Expected outcomes over the next five years

- All children and young people will be able to access a suitable, high quality education place that meets their individual needs.
- Educational attainment at the end of each key stage will be the best in Wales and in line with top quartile performance in the core cities of the UK.
- Every child will leave primary school literate and numerate in line with age related expectations.
- Pupils from low-income families will achieve at the same level as their peers – we will close the attainment gap.

- Children and young people with additional learning needs will be able to access an improved system designed to ensure that their needs are assessed, and the provision necessary to meet those needs is planned for in a more collaborative, consistent and equitable way.
- All young people will achieved a recognised qualification at the end of statutory schooling.
- All young people will complete statutory schooling equipped with a good range of transferrable skills for life and make a successful transition to education, employment or training.
- All young people are safe and their emotional well-being is high.
- Children and young people will be aware of their right to participate, for their opinion to be heard, and will be involved in decision-making about education policies and services from across the council which affect their lives.

## **Actions**

### **What we will do:**

- Focus on quality teaching in every classroom, every day to improve outcomes and accelerate progress for all pupils.
- Provide pathways that are appropriate to learners' needs, grounded in the curriculum for wales that are flexible and fit for the future, including implementing new pathways for learners at risk.
- Further challenge and support schools and partners to improve educational outcomes for pupils at risk of under achievement, in particular, looked after children, pupils from low-income families, pupils who are more able and talented, and those pupils with Additional Learning Needs.
- Deliver, adapt and embed the national reforms for pupils with Additional Learning Needs.
- Further, develop the use and application of assessment to accelerate learning and to underpin strong professional practice and accountability.
- Recognise, facilitate and encourage a wide range of opportunities for meaningful parent and carer engagement and involvement in children's learning.
- Further develop opportunities and methods to capture the voices of children and young people to inform service development.

### **What will it look like when it is good?**

#### **We will:**

- Increase the percentage of pupils achieving the expected outcomes or better in each phase of learning.
- Ensure that all pupils primary schools with a good range of qualifications.
- Increase the percentage of pupils leaving compulsory schooling with broad range of qualifications.
- Increase the number of young people making a successful transition to ongoing education, employment or training at the end of statutory schooling (year 11) and at the end of year 13.

- Increase the percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieving the expected outcomes or better in all phases.
- Increase the percentage of pupils eligible for Free School Meals achieving an average points score of 40+ in English/Welsh, mathematics and science in Key Stage 4 at the end of year 11.
- Improve the levels of achievement of vulnerable learners in line with their individual requirements, needs and aspirations. In particular, pupils with Additional Learning Needs, pupils educated 'other than at school', looked after children, and more able and talented learners.
- Maintain attendance levels in schools above the Welsh average.

The education outcomes framework sets out the baseline and the improvements we require over a 5-year period.

## Social Care: We will do whatever we can to support people in leading the best life they can whilst focusing on prevention and ensuring vulnerable people are safe

The COVID-19 crisis has had a direct impact on social care as the people we support are at a much heightened risk from the disease. During the crisis, social care has been directly involved protecting the health and social care workforce through the provider hub. It has helped co-ordinate volunteer effort through the community hub and provided support for people who are shielding. The majority of social care services have continued to operate throughout lockdown, but some, such as Day Care, have operated on an emergency basis.

Prior to COVID-19, the social care system as a whole was often described as being in a funding crisis. COVID-19 has put a national spotlight on how vital social care is for supporting vulnerable people, how inter-twined it is with the NHS, as well as issues of low pay amongst the social care workforce. COVID has also highlighted and compounded the challenge of market sustainability of some providers. Whilst it is vital that these issues are resolved, the cost of doing so is great it will need to be done so at a national level.

Demand for statutory social care may well increase as a result of COVID-19, either from people who are infected becoming seriously ill and needing recuperation or indirectly, because the lockdown has meant they have not engaged with preventative services for mental and physical health. As health metrics lag behind real time, the size of the indirect health impact of COVID-19 may build over time.

Services focusing on children and safeguarding vulnerable adults have continued to operate through the crisis. Demand for services to tackle domestic abuse (often linked to safeguarding issues) have risen sharply throughout the UK. Demand may also increase in respect of children's social care as the impact of lockdown, coupled with the long period where children have not had access to face to face to education and safe, protective professionals, will see an anticipated increase in referrals as risk-related issues become more readily communicable by children and more noticeable to professionals.

The community hub is showing that there is a huge amount of community capacity that can be tapped into for providing support to people. This has wider implications than social care and could realise the ambition in the current relationship strand of the transformation programme for the council to work through and support more self-reliant communities.

### **Actions**

- To identify a new model of community support based on the successes of the community hub which will improve the well-being of all people and prevent them from having to access statutory services for as long as possible.
- To deliver new day opportunities options based on consultation pre-Covid and subsequent emergency operating arrangements.
- To deliver a range of exciting new accommodation facilities to ensure that our most vulnerable people are able to access suitable accommodation, which meets their needs and improves their well-being.

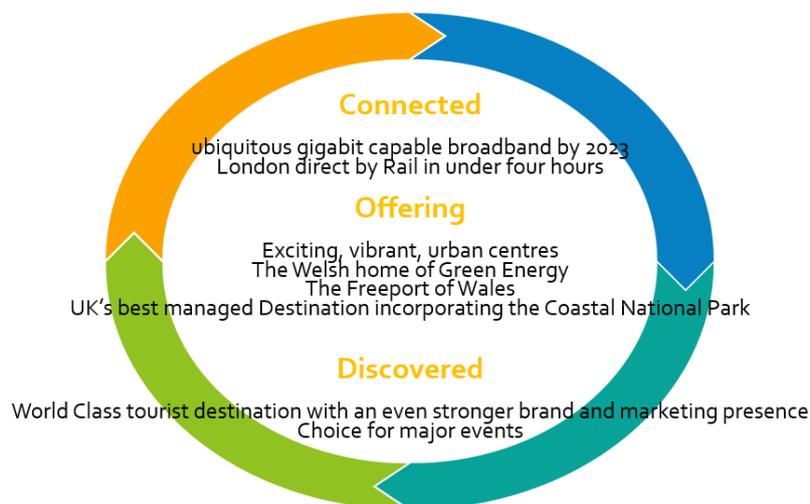
- To create new operating models building on the success of the provider hub and joint working with health, public health and public protection focussed on the care home market
- To identify and implement a range of initiatives to reduce service user waiting times and improve outcomes for services such as Assessment of Care Needs, Domiciliary Care, Residential Care and Reablement.
- Children's services will pursue a defined strategy to try and reduce the numbers of children in care, both by attempting to prevent children coming into care, at the same time as trying to return children who are already in care safely back to the care of their own families.
- To ensure that our most vulnerable people are protected from abuse and harm and are able to access the services they need in a timely manner.
- To use digital technology to improve employee and business performance.
- Recognised the importance of people being confident to use information communication technology and digital communication by promoting & developing digital skills as a priority.
- Develop services for people which improve their well-being and prevent them from having to access statutory services for as long as possible.

### **Measures**

We continue to provide Welsh Government with detailed, weekly information on a range of metrics that focus on the response and recovery to COVID 19 and we will develop new measures throughout the year.

Economic: We will work with partners to promote Pembrokeshire as a great place to visit, live and work

## Pembrokeshire - a great place to visit, live and work



The wording for the objective is taken from the Programme for Administration and also reflects the draft Economic Recovery Plan. It is a broad objective with big ambitions for changing the future of Pembrokeshire for the better by encouraging more skilled younger people to remain or settle in the County.

COVID 19 is likely to accelerate the existing trend of skilled people across a wide variety of professions working from home for the majority of their working week and only visiting their office base on an occasional basis. This presents Pembrokeshire with a significant opportunity to market itself as a location to live for skilled people who work predominantly from home, based on its fantastic environment and quality of life. Being better connected, especially via broadband is key to this.

The main issues facing the local economy have already been spelt out in the Long Term Trends section. COVID-19 will have a major impact on the economy and the structure for our recovery plan: Connected; Offering; and Discovered will put this recovery onto a long term sustainable footing.

### Connected

- **Ubiquitous gigabit capable broadband by 2023.** Our ambition is that Pembrokeshire is the best digitally connected County in Wales and COVID-19 has emphasised the importance of good quality broadband. We have already accessed a range of funding sources to facilitate better broadband (such as DCMS Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund) and have allocated £2m in the Capital programme to do this. UK Government has announced further funding and we will present a Digital Infrastructure Strategy to Cabinet in October that will detail how we will make the

most of opportunities, including community broadband, opportunities through Swansea Bay City Deal and 5G.

- **London direct by rail in under four hours.** Rail travel is sustainable and allows people to work as they travel; the journey time to London is now typically 4h 45m. We will play an active part by lobbying and as part of planned regional transport planning to get rail investment that benefits Pembrokeshire. New Hitachi dual diesel/electric rolling stock will cut the journey time from London to Swansea by 20 minutes. Doubling the track near Swansea has increased capacity. A planned Parkway station on the Swansea branch line has been estimated to save a further 14 minutes.

## Offering

- **Exciting, vibrant, urban centres.** Without investment and support for change, our larger town centres will continue to decline. We will build on our previous targeted approach to regeneration with investment in key facilities and some of these are listed below;
  - ✓ Haverfordwest: Western Quayside (former Ocky Whites). In July 2018 Cabinet decided to proceed with the redevelopment of this key site which will complement the successful Glan Yr Afon library and gallery. During 2019/20 we appointed design and engineering consultants and held public consultations on the design of the final scheme. The scope of the project has now been expanded to include improving the adjacent public realm and is currently out to tender. The value of the project within the capital programme includes £6,287,168 with external funding of £2,301,808.
  - ✓ Haverfordwest Castle - Our vision for the castle is for it to play a full role in the regeneration of the county town. During 2020/21 and 2021/22 a Conservation Management Plan will be developed which will guide all future work and changes to the castle to ensure it is properly looked after, both now and for future generations. Making changes to buildings of such significance take time and must be done properly and there will be an opportunity for engagement and consultation during this commission.”
  - ✓ Pembroke South Quay. We will build on the feedback we received during public consultation in 2019/20 to regenerate these historic buildings that are the gateway to Pembroke Castle. The work has been split into phases and the first phase is to stabilise the buildings to prevent further decay or possibly collapse.
  - ✓ Leisure. Whilst our leisure strategy is focused on becoming the most active County in Wales, investment in leisure facilities will increase the vibrancy of towns Cabinet has agreed to invest £4.2m in new leisure facilities on the Haverfordwest High (former STP) site emphasising that this is still a key objective for the Council



- **The Welsh home of Green Energy.** The Swansea Bay City Deal is an opportunity to support the energy sector, especially marine renewables. Haven Energy Kingdom is a multi-million pound feasibility study into the potential for Pembrokeshire and West Wales to lead the way in accelerating the transition to an integrated hydrogen and renewable energy system linked to the cluster of major energy infrastructure along the Milford Haven Waterway.
- **Support for Freeport proposals for Milford Haven.** Freeports are part of the UK Government's response to Brexit as and part of its plans to level up economic growth. We consider that there is a strong case to develop a Freeport at Milford Haven; a transformational opportunity that specifically addresses the decarbonisation, regeneration and 'levelling-up' priorities set out by the UK government. During the remainder of 2020/21 we will contribute to a bid for Freeport status, building on a recent viability assessment commissioned by Milford Haven Port Authority. A Freeport will require strong partnership working and we actively support – and probably lead – the development of a Special Purpose Vehicle to facilitate this.
- **UK's best managed Destination incorporating the Coastal National Park.** During 2020-21 we have already put in place Visitor Welcoming Teams, have encouraged café culture (including grants), and have taken an active approach to managing tourism, especially hotspots or activities, such as wild camping.
- **Great lifestyle.** The increased use of technology, promoting agile working supports the ability to work from home, particularly for those in professional and service areas of work.
- **High quality work opportunities.** Growth in sectors such as energy and marine technology, alongside more professional and higher quality offers in sectors such as tourism and hospitality present increased opportunity for high skilled jobs.

#### Discovered

- **World class tourist destination with an even stronger brand and marketing presence.** At the beginning of 2021/21 we set up Destination Management Partnership. The Partnership has been active throughout the COVID 19 crisis in managing the its impact including the delicate balance between community concerns over the possibility of increasing infection rates and protecting one of Pembrokeshire's more important industries.
- **Choice for major events.** Pembrokeshire has a growing reputation for major events. Whilst COVID 19 means that major events are unlikely to be held in the year, we will work with partners to bring major events back as soon as it is safe to do so. Evaluations of the impact of events we have supported have demonstrated the potential of major events to bring Pembrokeshire to new audiences.

## **Measures**

The Economic Recovery Plan contains a range of measures on both measures of success (such as having full fibre broadband coverage that is comparable with urban areas) as well as a range of indicators, such as the unemployment rate and, within our training programmes, the number of people completing recognised qualifications.

We will continue to monitor developments in the local labour market, such as the Claimant Count rate very closely, alongside collecting information about local business confidence to ascertain the impact of COVID 19 upon the local economy.

## Housing: Enable affordable, decent, and adaptable homes for all in sustainable locations

Housing, especially the building of affordable housing, is a strong feature of the Programme for Administration. Housing is naturally a key feature of the Deposit LDP & LDP2 vision as the LDP is one of the ways in which housing growth can be channelled towards more sustainable locations. It is also one of the ways in which more affordable housing can be developed. The outcomes of decent housing are a significant contribution to public health. We have developed a “pattern book” to support our new build programme for new council homes in Pembrokeshire.

Pembrokeshire has a relatively high house price earnings ratio, but in contrast to many places in England, has relatively low house prices. This has fuelled an increase in the number of second homes. A second home council tax premium has resulted in us having a much clearer picture on the number of second homes, and in which community they are located, but has not (yet) led to a significant reduction in the number of second homes or homes used as holiday lettings.

Related housing issues include developing more appropriate sheltered and supported housing (Haverfordia House has been purchased by the HRA and will be redeveloped as a sheltered housing scheme). A project to improve how customers log and track repairs is being progressed.

Reducing carbon emissions from housing is a challenge for the future. The council is in the process of replacing ten non-standard construction homes with brand new build houses in Tier Cross as it would not have been economic to have renovated them to meet modern building standards. Although it is likely that the vast majority of our existing housing stock can be upgraded, this comes at a significant cost. The more funding set aside for reducing carbon emissions, the less funding there is for building new homes

Homes as power stations project part of the Swansea Bay City Deal has the potential to reduce the carbon footprint of housing across Pembrokeshire. A number of planned council owned new build developments with designs to go beyond Part L of Building Regulations, in terms of energy efficiency with a requirement to achieve an EPC rating of A, including PV solar, over insulation, and battery storage.

During the COVID-19 emergency planning period we have taken action to ensure those that are homeless have been supported and protected. Building on this we can now work with Government support to deliver alternative options for the homeless in our community. We put in place short term options and will need to consider and implement a new homeless delivery model for the longer term needs of Pembrokeshire citizens.

Housing and social care were merged in the last year and we have seen enhancements to both areas of the service as result of this, and an improved service to our customers.

In future, the Council's priorities are:

- Drive innovation and improvement in our housing services, and achieve our 2020-50 ambitious Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account by delivering Council developments.
- Secure long term improvements in homelessness service provision and developing more holistic support to prevent homelessness.
- Continuing with existing projects to build more affordable housing including new build programmes include 33 homes at Cranham Park in Johnston, a planned 140+ homes at Brynhir, Tenby (Pembrokeshire Coast National Park granted outline planning permission in June 2020) as well as making council-owned land available for development e.g. former Haycastle, Hakin and Hubberston schools. Innovative housing schemes and the zero carbon agenda are key to our developments.
- Progressing the Community Land Trust development at Solva, funded from the second homes Council Tax premium and the Empty Homes Council Tax premium.
- Continue to improve our interface with housing customers, making digital the first choice, for instance by implementing new modules in our new housing management software.
- Continuing to support people at home. For instance our recently launched Home Support Plus is a paid-for service including cleaning, bed changing, laundry, ironing, dog walking, shopping and food provisions which is modelled around individual clients.
- To continue to improve engagement with our tenants and co-produce the enhancing of community space and community cohesion.
- To deliver 'homes' & communities not just houses and estates.
- To work in partnership with all social landlords in Pembrokeshire.
- Work to reduce rent arrears and to support tenants at an early stage of financial difficulties with a supportive model in ensure access to benefits, new visiting officer role.
- Continue to build on the WHQS achievements and improvements to our stock.

## **Measures**

We will develop measures throughout the year.

## We will promote pride in Pembrokeshire seeking to enhance its reputation as a place for exceptional environmental quality

Pembrokeshire's environment underpins the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. We continue to set a well-being objective for this area as although we can point to many examples of effective environmental management and policies, our environment faces many challenges.

The greatest threat to our environment bio-diversity (as well as wider society) is climate change and actions to promote this need to be in parallel with those to reduce its impact.

This well-being objective will contribute to prosperity (through tourism and the potential for growth in "green" and "blue" environmental sector jobs), and health. There is also the potential to contribute to the Relationships strand of our Transformation programme, as many people volunteer their time for environmental projects. The Eco-champions project, currently re-purposed a little in the light of COVID-19, demonstrates how effective this approach can be to raise awareness and change behaviour.

The Programme for Administration recognises how maintaining and protecting the quality of our environment is linked to the pride which people feel in the County as a whole. Tapping into people's sense of civic and social responsibility will help keep Pembrokeshire clean and attractive. Equally, it will also prompt individuals and communities to take action around wider environmental issues such as climate change and renewable energy.

The Cabinet strengthened our ability to deliver on keeping Pembrokeshire clean and tidy by allocating more resources in the budget for fly-tipping and street cleansing. It also allocated further funding for the on-going repair of roads as well as a capital pot for small road safety schemes. COVID 19 has led to a greater awareness of littering and other environmental issues as many more people have been walking around their localities. As lockdown has eased, we have also responded to the risk of increased litter and other environmental damage by discouraging wild camping including in car parks.

The actions for this objective split into five main headings

**Carbon reduction.** In 2019, the Council declared a climate change emergency and for much of the last year, a working group has been looking at initiatives and developing an action plan. At the time the budget was set, this was un-costed and a specific budget allocation has not been made.

We have already commented on our work with partners in the Swansea Bay City Deal on marine renewable energy and the potential of the hydrogen economy. Other work includes planned projects that were halted due to COVID-19 such as a solar panel canopy for County Hall car park and increasing the number of electric car charging points (Pembrokeshire already has the highest number of publically available electric car charging points per capita of any Welsh council).

**Enhancing bio-diversity.** The Capital programme contains a £350k+ scheme for green infrastructure in Haverfordwest. Work is now complete on the installation of a new

footbridge across the Cleddau just outside Haverfordwest that will enable much better public access to the riverside and is part of the Cleddau Reaches project, a green infrastructure scheme run by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) and involving a range of organisations. Other work will include restoring bio-diversity on the burgage terraces at Haverfordwest Castle, recommendations within the review of County Farms to use this land holding for environmental benefits and working with partners to manage land in a way which benefits bio-diversity, for instance, frequency of grass cutting.

**Encouraging more environmentally friendly ways to travel.** During the first phase of lockdown, there was a reduction in air pollution, much of which is generated by cars, vans and lorries due to a reduction in the amount of travel. Whilst this effect was much more marked in cities, it has emphasised the importance of active travel, which can open up wild-life rich areas in a sensitive way to many more people, including disabled people. The extension of a cycle track through Canaston Woods is a case in point. This year's £1.2 million Active Travel grant will be split between the Narberth to Haverfordwest multi-user route; Saundersfoot & Tenby Active Travel package and a small core allocation.

**Managing waste.** We have implemented changes to waste collection successfully during 2019-20 and increased the amount of recycling we collect, effectively managing the risk of a fine for not hitting relevant targets. Oversight has been maintained through scrutiny. Throughout the remainder of the year, we will continue to monitor implementation.

**Progressing our Local Development Plan.** Our local development plan is one of the main ways that we will secure future Pembrokeshire's future environmental quality. During 2019-20 the replacement LDP moved to Deposit Stage. During 2020-21 we will consult on the Focussed Changes - amendments to the Deposit Plan, in light of new and emerging evidence. We are revisiting town centre approaches, but also introducing specific policies on broadband and are reviewing our housing and employment approaches. Once Council has agreed, the Plan will then be subject to an Inspection in Public.

## **Measures**

We will develop measures throughout the year. There are a number of indicators which we already report to Welsh Government on waste.

## Transformation – Technology, Culture and Relationships

The next three sub-sections relate to our transformation programme. This continues to be structured around Technology, Culture and Relationship. Many of the actions that we have already adopted as part of our Transformation Programme has put the authority in a good position to respond to COVID 19.

COVID 19 has changed the way that all organisations operate. The service changes we made as part of the response or recovery phases are opportunities to learn from and identify good practice. Both Audit Wales and the Future Generation Commissioner has stressed the importance of organisational learning and the Council has set up an Organisational Learning Cell, a team of people to look at this as part of its recovery planning process. The findings and outcomes from this work will support the delivery of organisational remodelling, restoration and renewal, and help shape how our Transformation programme develops. The actions listed in this section will be supplemented and potentially changed by this work.

Cabinet adopted a set of concise Principles for Recovery from the COVID 19 Crisis at its July 2020 meeting, three of which were particularly relevant to Transformation. These emphasise that COVID 19 has changed the way in which the Council operates: we cannot and should not try to return to exactly the same way in which we used to work; COVID 19 has proved the power of community action to make people's lives better, and; COVID 19 has demonstrated the power of modern communication methods.

- There is an urgent need to capitalise on and implement new ways of operating including completing our Smarter working project. This may require a redesign of our current service provision with a greater emphasis on digital service delivery.
- We must build upon the incredible Community support shown during this crisis and continue to lead on partnership working across all sectors.
- We will build upon the open, transparent and modern communication methods seen during the pandemic to consult, listen and engage with stakeholders, residents and employees to build trusted working relationships, utilising all available avenues.

### Technology

It is difficult to over-estimate the way in which information communication technology has helped manage the response to COVID-19 as well as the way in which it has enabled the council as an organisation to continue to function and provide services.

Our Smarter working project has enabled many employees to work from home rather than an office environment. We will learn from this experience to look at opportunities for how we use current our office accommodation in the future.

COVID-19 has led a greater number of services being delivered digitally and we want customers choose digital first (where they can). We developed a digital roadmap showing planned developments just before lockdown. This includes key infrastructure projects such as implementing the Financial and Information Management System and Electronic Document Management as well as developments to customer facing services such as My Account, including the new Track It feature.

The Technology strand will be supported by changes to services and the policies that support them, again, building on Organisational Learning work. We will rationalise Strategies, Policies and Plans to align with the organisational priorities post Covid-19, revisit Service Prioritisation and complete the Business Process Re-design programme. We will also implement the Data Management Strategy in a move towards being a data led Council.

## Culture

In 2019-20 we concluded the first part of a project to change to the organisational culture towards one based on learning, purpose and results by agreeing new behaviour standards that apply right across the organisation. We want to embed a positive culture in governance structures and our workforce.

We will continue to roll out training and awareness of the new behaviour standards; the planned training programme was interrupted by the COVID 19 response. We plan to link this to performance appraisal.

We will continue to engage employees, for instance through staff surveys (in various forms) and develop more inclusive mechanisms around service planning/Directorate business planning.

We will also continue with ongoing organisational and workforce development, e.g. matrix management and examine the potential of having more generic posts based around job families.

## Relationships

This strand of the transformation programme focuses on changing our relationship with communities; encouraging them to be more self-reliant. This does not mean walking away from providing services, but it does mean that, over time, we move to an enabling role.

The Community Hub and the Pembrokeshire Community Support Network, set up response to COVID-19 have resulted in a step change in community support. We want to build on the volunteering networks supporting people during COVID-19 crisis to create a new relationship with our communities.

A new relationship requires different methods of communication. Although enabled by information communication technology, it will also require a change in relationships and our ability to respond to communities' views. We will implement and roll out new consultation and engagement software called Bang the Table. We will also draft and implement a new Communication Strategy.

## Resourcing priorities

### The 2020-21 Budget

As a result of COVID-19 the County Council Budget for 2020-21 and the Summary Medium Term Financial Plan 2020-21 to 2023-24, approved by Council on 27 February 2020 will need to be updated to reflect the current and future financial impact of COVID-19.

Most of the additional costs relating to COVID-19 and the net income lost for Quarters 1 and 2 2019-20 will be funded by Welsh Government. Additional funding is being considered by Welsh Government for the remainder of 2020-21. Cabinet decided to create a Covid-19 reserve of £1.806m, earmarked to fund the expected ongoing financial pressure of the Covid-19 pandemic in the current and future years.

A revised Medium Term Financial Plan will be developed that is adaptable to the phases of the Covid-19 response, incident (crisis), recovery and steady state. The Council has moved from the crisis phase to the recovery phase of the response and has developed a Recovery Strategy.

When seen against the impact of COVID-19 the context for the 2020-21 budget does not have the relevance that it usually has, but it is worth re-stating this in order to make sense of the budget.

- As of February 2020, there was an easing of austerity and constraints on public spending. Pembrokeshire had received a good budget settlement (Aggregate External Finance). The increase for Pembrokeshire was 4.9% (£8.051m) when adjusted for transfers into the settlement and much higher relative to other authorities than in previous years resulting in a funding gap of £6.5m. However, the budget still required £5.1m efficiencies / service reductions / additional income to be found with a Council Tax increase of 5% £3.0m, once growth items of £1.6m were factored in.
- It is also worth noting that February 2020's budget was more influenced by the priorities in the Programme for Administration than previous years. Cabinet has identified growth areas the focus of which is in Education and Social Care but also includes front line services under strain such as Homelessness, repairs to highways, planning, public protection and local environmental services such as waste, street cleaning and fly tipping. Council also agreed to the Programme for Administration reserve funding: Road Safety Schemes; a Regeneration Restructure; Improving Teaching and Leadership Programmes with Schools and tackling Pot Holes/Poor Road Surfaces.

Council agreed a 5% increase in Council Tax, close to the average increase for Welsh Authorities. Pembrokeshire County Council continues to have the lowest Band D equivalent Council Tax for County Council purposes in Wales and as a result Pembrokeshire continues to have the largest shortfall between its actual spending and what Welsh Government predicts it needs to spend to deliver services, its Standard Spending Assessment (SSA).

A consultation was held in early 2020. There was general public support for Cabinet's growth proposals, especially for Education and Social Services as well as for a 5% Council Tax increase.

A summary of 2020-21 Revenue Expenditure and how it compares the expenditure in 2019-20 is listed below. It is worth noting that it is likely that there will be movement in these budgets due to COVID-19.

<b>2019-20 Period 5 Rolling Net Expenditure Budget £000's</b>	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>2020-21 Estimate Net Expenditure £000's</b>
70,563	Education Services - Individual School Budgets	75,517
18,074	Education Services - Other	19,351
13,362	Social Care - Children	14,395
51,554	Social Care – Adults	55,082
1,133	Housing General Fund	1,190
0	Housing Revenue Account (Ring Fenced)	0
7,947	Highways & Transportation Services	8,566
5,770	Culture & Related Services	6,103
1,683	Planning & Development Services	1,714
13,969	Environmental Services	15,322
9,500	Council Tax Reduction Scheme	9,710
7,557	Central, Corporate & Democratic Services	8,027
334	Court Services	334
0	Corporate Restructure Saving	(365)
1,000	Contingency	1,249
202,446	<b>TOTAL SERVICE BUDGETS</b>	<b>216,195</b>
7,556	Levies	8,159
(285)	Net Investment Income	(362)
11,749	Capital Financing Costs (including MRP)	11,468
<b>221,466</b>	<b>COUNCIL BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>235,460</b>

## Capital

The Council budget papers contain details of the Capital Programme as agreed at that point in time. Capital funding often involves grants funding or contributions from other organisations and it is more difficult to accurately predict in which precise year projects will require funding.

The following table sets out planned expenditure as at Feb 2020 on the three elements of capital expenditure: the capital programme, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools building programme and the Housing Revenue Account. Capital funding is financed from a variety of sources

including borrowing. The budget has a section on affordability of the capital programme and the introduction of a cap on Capital Financing costs (Net of HRA and LGBI) of £14m per annum is assisting to address affordability.

	<b>2019-20 Projected Out-turn</b>	<b>2020-21 Estimate</b>	<b>2021-22 Estimate</b>	<b>2022-23 Estimate</b>	<b>2023-24 Estimate</b>
<b>Capital Programme</b>	39.5	28.9	16.8	5.1	4.2
<b>21st Century:</b>					
Band A	6.8	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Band B	4.3	20.2	40.8	26.9	13.9
<b>HRA</b>	10.1	22.0	16.9	16.0	15.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60.7</b>	<b>71.2</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>33.7</b>

## Getting involved

Corporate Planning relies on feedback from our stakeholders, and for this year, this is **truer** than ever.

The actions listed in the Transformation Section, such as implementing new consultation and engagement software and developing a new communication strategy will assist us in this task.

Co-production of services, something that lies at the heart of the relationship strand of our Transformation Programme is another incredibly practical way we would like people to get involved in the delivery of public services in these unprecedented times.

The details of how to make comments on this Plan are at the front of this document.