



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

28th May 2020

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer
Karen Jones

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All

Member Panel – Coronavirus Recovery Phase

Purpose of the Report:

To seek approval of Council to establish a new Member Panel that will support the Cabinet and Council in the recovery phase of the Coronavirus national emergency.

Background:

At the end of March 2020, the Council moved swiftly, in step with direction from the Welsh and UK governments, to mobilise an emergency response to the spread of Coronavirus across the UK.

Government attention has now changed to preparing for a lengthy period of further adjustment which will involve:

- Establishing capacity and capability to further reduce the spread of coronavirus. The Council will have an important role

here in mobilising a contact tracing service within the regional and national framework to test, trace and protect citizens;

- Establishing the basis upon which the Council can resume services and functions - ensuring the safety of its own workforce but also of those who need to use the services/functions. Social distancing will mean that services will need to be re-shaped considerably, moving to a “new normal” rather than returning to the business as usual services that existed prior to the outbreak; and
- Establishing the wider impact on the communities of Neath Port Talbot. The impact assessment will be undertaken through a multi-agency community impact assessment exercise, using the NPT Public Services Board as the oversight mechanism.

The scale of change that will need to be effected will be considerable. It is crucial that the impact of proposed changes on residents, including those with protected characteristics, as well as the financial impacts of the changes are fully considered as part of the recovery exercise. The proposed Member Panel will inform, support and challenge the recovery exercise and also ensure that every Member of Council has an opportunity to feed into and shape thinking.

Financial Impacts:

No direct implications

Integrated Impact Assessment:

No direct implications

Valleys Communities Impacts

The Panel will be able to establish mechanisms to ensure the needs of valley communities are fully considered.

Workforce Impacts:

No direct impacts

Legal Impacts:

Council has powers within the Constitution to establish a Member Panel and to agree its terms of reference.

Risk Management Impacts:

Established emergency planning protocols for the recovery phase of emergency incidents recommends that there is elected member involvement in the recovery process. As the recovery process related to Covid-19 is likely to extend over a period of years, there is a risk that Member involvement would be ad hoc if a clear mechanism to secure Member involvement is not established.

Consultation:

There is no requirement for external consultation on this item. All three political group leaders have been consulted on this proposal.

The proposed terms of reference of the Panel places an emphasis on hearing the views and taking evidence from citizens, businesses and other organisations to inform the recovery process and also provides for the Panel to commission consultation should the Panel consider that to be appropriate.

Recommendations:

That Council approves the establishment of the proposed Member Panel – Coronavirus Recovery Phase and the associated terms of reference as set out at Appendix 1.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To ensure there is a clear mechanism in place to secure Member involvement in the recovery phase of the national emergency situation that has developed as a result of the spread of Coronavirus across the United Kingdom.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for immediate implementation.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Member Panel – Coronavirus Recovery Phase

Officer Contact:

Mrs K Jones, Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Digital Officer. Tel: 01639 763284 or e-mail: k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

Coronavirus Recovery Phase – Member Panel

Purpose of Group

To support and advise the Cabinet and Council on approaches that could form the basis of the recovery phase of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key Tasks

To receive, comment upon and constructively challenge approaches proposed for the recovery phase of the pandemic;

To ensure the views and opinions of the community inform recovery planning processes and activities;

To ensure all members of Council and the political groups are able to inform recovery planning processes and activities;

To assist in ensuring recovery planning is based on a thorough assessment of the impact of the pandemic on communities, drawing out differential impacts between different groups of people, businesses and other organisations;

To test proposals for resuming council services and functions against government guidance and other relevant considerations;

To ensure sound financial estimates of the response and recovery phases are developed;

To test the adequacy of governance arrangements to support the recovery phase;

To assist in developing a vision of what the “new normal” could look like – to include challenges as well as opportunities

Membership

Chair: Leader of Council - Cllr. R.G.Jones

Cabinet Members: Cllr. E.V.Latham and Cllr. C. Clement-Williams

Labour Group: (5 members) Cllr. M.Harvey, Cllr. S.M.Penry,
Cllr. S.Reynolds, Cllr. D. Cawsey and Cllr. M. Protheroe

Plaid Cymru Group: (3 members) Cllr. A. Llewelyn, Cllr. L. Purcell
and Cllr. J.D. Morgan

Independent Group: (2 members) Cllr. S.K. Hunt and Cllr. H.C.Clarke

Frequency of Meetings

Every 4 weeks unless otherwise agreed by the Panel by unanimous
decision

Reports to

Cabinet

Other Matters

Is able to commission research and advice from Council officers

Is able to invite third parties to give evidence to the committee