Action Plan

While there are many existing projects and programmes that will continue to play an important role in the area's economic recovery post pandemic, the aim of the following action plan is to support the delivery of the Neath Port Talbot Economic Recovery Plan and guide the Council and key delivery partners through the next 12-18 months as the economy eases out of "restrictions" and moves into the 'new normal' stage.

The plan is not intended to duplicate any actions that are already being implemented, but to introduce new activities and build on key areas of work that will impact our economic recovery. In addition, as the economic outlook is still relatively uncertain, the action plan will be considered a working document that will need to evolve if circumstances change.

Objective 1: Support our local business community				
Actions	**Partners** (lead in bold)	**Funding**	**Outcomes**	**How we will monitor outcomes**
Administer WG Covid-19 financial support grants for local businesses.				
Support indigenous growth projects that encourage the diversification of the economy and the creation of highly skilled and/or sustainable employment across all key business sectors.				
Work with partners to develop business support inventions that focus on the decarbonisation of industry and residential homes to stimulate economic growth and create new green/low carbon related job opportunities.				

Set up a Manufacturing/Engineering Business Forum to: - create a strategic platform for businesses to engage with the Council; - encourage businesses to communicate more effectively with each other; - identify opportunities for mutual benefits and cross-working; and - provide intelligence to help the Council develop sector specific action plans.				
Develop an action plan to support the manufacturing sector to include information, support and advice on: - Accessing UK and Welsh Government business support packages. - Upskilling digital technology/IT systems to help overcome supply chain issues. - Implement new working practices. - Consider diversification strategies. - Networking opportunities by trade bodies and tailored support packages for sub sectors such as aerospace and automotive.				
Support the delivery of the Council's DARE strategy by encouraging the delivery of projects to take advantage of the growth potential within the green/ low carbon economy and activities around the development of the port area.				

Deliver targeted business support to help the hospitality, tourism and retail sectors recover from the pandemic and create/safeguard future employment.				
Support businesses to improve their digital competency across all business sectors.				
Adopt a collaborative approach to supporting businesses within the foundational economy and bringing greater economic benefits to our valley communities.				
Work with key partners to support the re-opening and future sustainability of our town centres and the retail sector.				
Objective 2: Create an environment that encourages inward investment, indigenous growth and diversification of the local economy				
Launch the new Invest in NPT website to promote NPT as an ideal place for new investment and indigenous growth.				
Secure funding to develop the infrastructure to create an environment that encourages new business investment and the diversification of the local economy.				-
Work with City Deal/Welsh Government to bring forward high quality, affordable and accessible business space to attract new investment.				

Work with key organisations such as the Wales Hydrogen Trade Association, South Wales Industrial Cluster and academic partners to promote the area and increase our exposure both nationally and internationally.			
Encourage anchor businesses and regionally significant companies and their supply chains to become "Promotional Partners" with the Council to help to attract new investment to Neath Port Talbot.			
Focus on delivering objectives set out in the Council's DARE Strategy to target and attract investment from low-carbon innovation; green energy and advanced manufacturing sectors.			
Objective 3: Deliver support to encourage new start-ups and help young businesses grow			
Utilise Council buildings such as Sandfields Business Centre and the Plaza to develop Enterprise Hubs to support new start-ups and growing businesses. Explore the potential to roll out the Business Centre model to Valleys locations.			
Work with partners to secure funding to develop low cost, flexible business premises on easy access terms to support new business start-ups.			
Increase support and advice for new business start-ups through:			

- Grants via the Council's Innov8 programme/UK Steel Enterprise Fund. - Delivery of Enterprise Clubs (practical advice and guidance to those considering self-employment). - Delivering 1-1 support; workshops, and growth support programmes in partnership with Business Wales, Town Square Spaces Ltd and the Rebel Business School.				
Develop and deliver a programme of support that encourages self-employment/ entrepreneurship within our valley communities via our dedicated Enterprise Development Officers.				
Objective 4: Deliver an effective Employment Support service that supports residents and local employers.				
Create an Employment Support Hub to help local residents improve their employability skills and support them into work.				
Review the provision of employability support within Neath Port Talbot to ensure a "joined up" approach to the delivery of services to residents and local employers.				
Explore further funding opportunities to enhance local employability provision, and develop collaborative bids across the Council departments.				

Support local residents to acquire the necessary skills needed to access employment opportunities in growing sectors such as health and social care, food and accommodation, transportation, ICT and green/low carbon related jobs.				
Provide work placements to young people within the Council and with local employers as part of the delivery of the new DWP Kickstart programme.				•
Objective 5: Deliver an effective Community Benefits Programme				
Ensure Community Benefits form part of the delivery aims of key construction, regeneration and infrastructure related projects to enhance local business supply chains, encourage apprenticeships, traineeships, work experience and paid work opportunities for local residents.				
Use the Neath Port Talbot Employer Support Group (ESG) as a single point of contact for internal and external organisations to collaborate on maximising opportunities for employment, training, upskilling and to support inward investment projects.				

Objective 6: Review the Council's procurement processes to ensure spend is maximising social and economic benefits.				
Identify ways in which procurement can be used to support business growth, create new jobs and safeguard existing employment.				
Identify procurement challenges faced by local businesses and develop an effective response to adopting a more business friendly approach to procuring.				
Work with local businesses to improve tendering/procuring skills.				
Use the Buy Local campaign to demonstrate how a change in procurement policy can benefit the local economy and encourage procurers to "think local" when procuring goods and services.				
Objective 7: Use communication channels to inform residents and local businesses on service delivery and make its quick and easy to access information and support				
Use the Front and Centre campaign and the new Invest in NPT website to promote NPT as a place for new investment and indigenous growth and to set the tone for the economic recovery of the county.				

Deliver social media campaigns and regular PR stories/case studies to promote business and employment support services.				
Revamp the existing Council's business support webpages to further promote and enhance council services and ensure local businesses know where to access support and information on funding, premises, exporting, events as well as informative information on key regeneration projects, procurement opportunities, etc.				
Promote the Work Station as a One Stop Shop for Employability Support, and explore options for similar hubs in other areas.				