



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Portfolio Holder:

Thank you for your email regarding the Council's medium and long-term strategy for Ystradgynlais post-COVID19 to support business recovery and address deprivation.

I note the findings and recommendations of the Centre for Towns report into the effect of the pandemic and the specific challenges faced by communities such as Ystradgynlais.

The Council and other stakeholders face the urgent task of understanding the evolving implications of Covid-19 for the county and how to respond most effectively. This requires an understanding of the local dimensions of the economic shock, followed by a focused action plan to support the short-term, phased opening-up of the economy, and subsequent recovery. This needs to be followed by a longer-term strategy to guide future economic resilience and growth.

As part of the recovery phase, the Council has established a Thriving & Sustainable Economy sub-group to oversee strategy and actions to support business and economic recovery. A detailed Economic Recovery framework is being developed as part of this work. To help inform this work, the Council has just completed a COVID19 Impact Assessment for Powys, comparing both nationally and internationally where possible. The Impact Assessment will be made available publicly (once translated) within the next couple of weeks. It has not been possible for all indicators to assess at a Middle/Lower Super Output Area so best available information has been used. As you may be aware, an online Council survey to assess the impact of Covid-19 on Powys businesses is also underway.

The recovery and regeneration of the local economy and communities will require a collaborative approach with the Council working in partnership with stakeholders at a local, regional and national level. As examples, the Council continues to work closely with Welsh Government and Business Wales to implement Covid-19 support measures for businesses and local communities. Work is also currently underway to support the future opening-up of town centres and the visitor economy. A Mid Wales Town Centre Action Group has been set up by Welsh Government with Powys and Ceredigion County Councils, to provide a strategic approach to town centre recovery. This will link with the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns initiative supporting measures to improve environmental, economic, social and cultural well-being. A Powys wide 'support local' marketing campaign will shortly be launched to support local businesses and purchasing. At a regional level, the Council is working collaboratively on the implementation of the recently adopted Mid Wales Strategic Economic Plan and proposals for the Mid Wales Growth Deal, which will help support economic recovery and new investment into Powys.

The impact of Covid-19 on local businesses and communities such as Ystradgynlais is still emerging and will be felt for many years to come. The Council is committed to doing all it can to support the long-term recovery of the economy and will be actively engaging with local stakeholders as part of this work.