

**CABINET**  
**28 NOVEMBER 2022**

**Local Innovation Strategy**

**Recommendations / key decisions required:**

- To endorse the content of the Local Innovation Strategy:
- To agree the four Innovation Opportunities identified in the Strategy, in the areas of Digital; Health & Wellbeing; Foundational Economy; and Circular Economy:
- To request officers to further explore these opportunities for implementation where possible.

**Reasons:**

To support the recovery and restructuring of Carmarthenshire's economy through innovation.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted Yes Community and Regeneration

Cabinet Decision Required: Yes

Council Decision Required: No

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER: - Councillor Gareth John

Directorate: Chief Executives

Name of Head of Service: Jason Jones

Report Author: Helen Morgan

Designations:

Head of Regeneration

Economic Development Manager

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## Local Innovation Strategy

Cardiff University's Centre for Innovation Policy Research was commissioned by the Authority to explore innovation prospects for Carmarthenshire. The general aim was to identify proposals to support the recovery and restructuring of Carmarthenshire's economy through innovation. The aims were to explore the contribution of certain key sectors, specifically: the role of the country council and the wider public sector, especially with respect to the use of public sector spending power to support innovation; and to focus in particular on the Foundational Economy; Health and Wellbeing; Digital innovation; and the impact of Climate Change and the prospects of a Green Recovery by harnessing the potential of the Circular Economy.

The commission proceeded through three stages: (a) a desktop analysis of key documents such as the Business Advisory Group meeting notes, Economic Recovery and Delivery Plan and the CLES report work on community wealth building and progressive procurement; (b) consultations with 50 key stakeholders in the county, the region and the nation to identify the challenges, constraints and future opportunities for innovation; and (c) the development of a strategy to promote and support innovation in Carmarthenshire.

The Strategy, a copy of which is attached, recommends 4 opportunities for innovation:

### Opportunity 1 – Digital

- Improved fibre and mobile connectivity
- Opportunities for next generation digital technologies
- Addressing digital skills
- Developing a rural digital innovation centre

### Opportunity 2 – Health

- Development of a dispersed living laboratory to test new medical products and services

### Opportunity 3 – Foundational Economy

- Sustainable food procurement and development of the local food supply chain

### Opportunity 4 – Circular Economy

- Leveraging an approach for the Net Zero Agenda through reducing waste and recycling.

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Endorse the content of the Local Innovation Strategy.
2. Agree the four Innovation Opportunities identified in the Strategy, in the areas of Digital; Health & Wellbeing; Foundational Economy; and Circular Economy:
3. Request officers to further explore these opportunities for implementation where possible.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

**Yes**

## IMPLICATIONS

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	No	Yes

### Policy

Alignment with CCC's Economic Recovery Plan is essential and this will monitor any significant changes in the economic climate and escalate as appropriate.

Consideration has been afforded to how we can apply the five ways of working as we make progress on the identified opportunities. This will be further developed as detailed plans for delivering the opportunities are taken forward.

### Finance

Funding will be required to deliver the recommendations of the Local Innovation Strategy. UK Government's Shared Prosperity fund could be a possible source of external funding for any projects emanating from the Strategy.

### Risk Management Issues

Each intervention will be required to maintain a risk register and to mitigate the risks for the whole life period of the activity.

### Physical Assets

Some interventions will entail investment opportunities in existing physical assets in our town centres.

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed:      **Jason Jones**                      **Head of Regeneration**

1. **Scrutiny Committee**  
Report to go to Community and Regeneration Scrutiny
2. **Local Member(s)**  
n/a
3. **Community / Town Council**  
n/a
4. **Relevant Partners**  
n/a
5. **Staff side representatives and other organisations**  
n/a

**CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)  
AWARE/CONSULTED**

Yes

**Include any observations here**