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**To: Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board**

**On: 14 January 2022**

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**Report by: Clerk**

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**Heading: COVID-19 Emergency Governance Arrangements**

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Direction Required to Health Board, Council or Both	Direction to:	
	1. No Direction Required	<b>X</b>
	2. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	
	3. Renfrewshire Council	
	4. NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and Renfrewshire Council	

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This briefing provides an update on the current position following the emergence in November 2021 of a new variant of coronavirus – Omicron - which with very high transmission rates, has already become the dominant variant of COVID-19 within Scotland.
- 1.2 To ensure the HSCP can take swift action to respond to the rapidly changing position, this paper also seeks delegated authority to the Interim Chief Officer to make urgent decisions, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the IJB, where those decisions cannot not wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Board.
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## **2. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the IJB:

- Notes the existing situation with regard to the impact of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 on services provided by Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership ("The HSCP");
- Agrees as a temporary measure to authorise the Interim Chief Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the IJB to make urgent decisions where necessary arising from the impact of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 that require to be taken prior to the next meeting of the IJB, including on the temporary suspension of services and/or the redeployment of staff from areas to maintain service provision in priority areas; and

- Agrees that a report will be brought to the next scheduled meeting of the IJB on 28 January 2022 setting out the decisions taken by the Interim Chief Officer under the delegated powers authorised in this report

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### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Since the last IJB meeting on 19 November 2021, there has been a significant increase in the number of positive cases of COVID-19 recorded across the UK and Scotland. This has been driven by the emergence of a new variant of COVID - Omicron - which has seen the average daily case rate increase across the UK to a seven day average of around 182,000 cases per day and continue to climb. In Scotland, the seven day average at the time of writing is around 16,000 cases.
- 3.2 Evidence suggests that Omicron is less severe than previous COVID-19 variants however the increased levels of transmission of the virus mean that health and social care services will continue to operate in severely challenging circumstances. Hospital admissions have doubled over the festive period as a result and the current position is very fluid and continues to evolve at pace.
- 3.3 In response to the transmissibility and impact of the new Omicron variant, the HSCP continues to adhere to national advice and guidance and has already put measures in place to ensure that we continue to protect our most vulnerable service users and their carers and ensure our staff feel well informed, safe and supported.
- 3.4 We are continuing to deploy our resources where they are needed most, taking an informed, risk assessed approach which can flex and adapt to changing circumstances, examples of immediate priorities include:
- 3.4.1 Proactive capacity / surge planning for a range of scenarios, to ensure we can continue delivering services to our most vulnerable service users
- 3.4.2 Implementation of guidance across all services in line with the latest national direction, including recent guidance on exemptions from self isolation and care home visiting
- 3.4.3 Supporting the continued delivery of the accelerated booster programme at mass vaccination centres and facilitating easy access to vaccinations for frontline staff
- 3.4.4 Creating capacity to support seven-day discharge from hospital with twice daily meetings to facilitate this, and in care at home
- 3.4.5 Enhanced care home support and oversight arrangements remain in place and 'huddles' have been stepped up to daily

- 3.4.6 Communicating changes clearly and promptly to all key stakeholders – staff; service users, IJB, partners
- 3.4.7 Ensuring there are mechanisms for managers and staff to quickly highlight issues as they arise e.g. daily huddles, risk management
- 3.5 Furthermore, governance arrangements have been reviewed to ensure the IJB can respond to evolving circumstances. In light of the rapidly changing position, the Interim Chief Officer is seeking delegated authority to make urgent decisions, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the IJB, where those decisions cannot not wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Board.
- 3.6 An update report will be brought to the next IJB Meeting on 28 January 2022 to allow members to further review governance arrangements.

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### Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - The Chief Officer will brief the Chair and Vice Chair on any finance implications relating to any decision being proposed under the delegated emergency powers.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – The Chief Officer will brief the Chair and Vice Chair on any HR implications relating to any decision being proposed under the delegated emergency powers.
3. **Community Planning** – Nil
4. **Legal** - This report seeks approval for temporary governance arrangements to be established by the IJB.
5. **Property/Assets** – Nil
6. **Information Technology** – Nil
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – Nil
8. **Health & Safety** – Nil
9. **Procurement** – Nil
10. **Risk** – Nil
11. **Privacy Impact** – Nil

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**List of Background Papers: None.**

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