

Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 29 May 2020	15:00	Skype meeting,

Present

Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Eddie Devine, Councillor Alistair Mackay, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor Iain Nicolson

Chair

Councillor McGurk, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

S Black, Chief Executive; S Quinn, Director of Children's Services; M Crearie, Director of Communities, Housing & Planning Services; G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; L Mahon, Head of Communications & Marketing and P Fara, Web & Multi-media Editor (both Chief Executive's); J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice and Chief Social Work Officer (Children's Services); O Reid, Head of Communities & Public Protection, L Bell, Strategic Lead, Paisley Partnership Cultural Regeneration and C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager (all Communities, Housing & Planning Services); K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, L Neary, Head of Transformation, HR & OD, M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager and L Belshaw, Democratic Services Manager (all Finance & Resources); S Strachan, Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley) (Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); V Hollows, Chief Executive (Renfrewshire Leisure); and D Mair, Civil Contingencies Officer, Civil Contingencies Service.

Recording of Meeting

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Convener intimated that this meeting of the Board would be recorded and that the recording would be available to watch on the Council's website.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in item 2 on the agenda as she was an employee of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde but not in the Council's area and intimated that she would remain in the meeting during consideration of the item.

1 Minute of Previous Meeting

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 22 May 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Update on Covid 19

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Council's current arrangements and response to the ongoing international Coronavirus, COVID19 pandemic. The report provided information on the national position including the number of cases and deaths at both Scottish and UK levels. The recent publication of updated figures and analysis from the National Records of Scotland was also included which continued to show that the rate of increase in deaths from COVID-19 was beginning to slow. A summary was also provided of other policy and guidance updates that had been released since the previous meeting of the Board on 22 May 2020. It was noted that as at 28 May 2020 there were 267,240 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in hospitals in the UK up from 250,908 reported on 22 May 2020. In Scotland there were now 15,288 confirmed hospital cases (up from 14,856). Of these, 3,934 cases were within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board (GGCHB) area (up from 3,806). In the GGCHB area there were 369 people in hospital (down from 400) of which 9 were in intensive care (down from 16) as either confirmed or suspected cases. Graphs in the report showed the increase in the overall numbers of deaths recorded at a UK and a Scottish level since 1 April 2020 and in each case showed that the rate of increase was slowing. The report also provided details specific to Renfrewshire.

The report referred to the Scottish Government's routemap and proposed stages for moving on from lockdown and set out the initial work being undertaken by the Council to prepare for recovery under Phase 1 of this plan; highlighted the support being provided for communities with updated information in relation to Care Homes and Care at Home Services; and provided an update on the support being provided to some of the most vulnerable residents in Renfrewshire. The report also gave a workforce planning update for the Council; confirmed the current position in relation to availability of PPE; employee testing procedures; the impact of absence on the availability of employees; and redeployment of staff into priority frontline roles; and provided an operational update from Environment and Infrastructure Services on Spaces for People Funding.

The report identified that at both a Scottish and UK Government level, the policy context in relation to the response to COVID-19, continued to develop at pace. Changes to existing policies, the introduction of new processes and announcements on future developments, were all being monitored. Since the last meeting of the Board on 22 May 2020, Test, Trace, Isolate and Protect 'Test and Protect' had been introduced with effect from 28 May 2020. The report intimated that this would be important step in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 moving forward and that Environmental Health Officers had

been trained to assist NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde by leading a team of contact tracers.

The Board heard from the Chief Executive in relation to the report generally and specifically from the Communities & Regulatory Manager on arrangements for Test and Protect, including the definition of a close contact; from the Director of Environment & Infrastructure on grass cutting activities, including timescales; and on proposed projects for Spaces for People Funding; from the Director of Children's Services on the reopening of schools and early learning centres; from the Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice (Chief Social Work Officer) on children's social work services; from the Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley) on care homes, care at home services and other health and social care partnership services; from the Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Leisure Limited on the reopening of golf courses and bowling greens with effect from 29 May 2020; from the Head of Communities & Public Protection on support to businesses in terms of how specific sectors should operate over the coming months; from the Head of Transformation, HR & OD on those staff in the at risk, self-isolating and shielded groups; from the Strategic Lead, Paisley Partnership Cultural Regeneration on the role and purpose of volunteering in the national and local contexts and in supporting the third sector and the operation of the neighbourhood hubs; and from the Director of Finance & Resources on funding.

Officers responded to members' questions and it was proposed (a) that information be provided to members on (i) FAQs being developed on Test and Protect; and (ii) predictive analytics modelling of staff absences in terms of their being in at risk, shielded or self-isolating groups; and (b) that information be submitted to a future meeting of the Board on (i) public toilets; (ii) the overall impact of the Covid emergency on the levels of rent arrears; and (iii) on the feasibility of introducing grass pathways through areas otherwise left uncut. This was agreed.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the current national and local situation with regards to COVID-19 and the impact on communities, businesses and the Council and its partners be noted;
- (b) That the response measures being put in place by the Council and its partners be noted;
- (c) That information be provided to members on (i) FAQs being developed on Test and Protect; and (ii) predictive analytics modelling of staff absences in terms of their being in at risk, shielded or self-isolating groups; and
- (d) That information be submitted to a future meeting of the Board on (i) public toilets; (ii) the overall impact of the Covid emergency on the levels of rent arrears; and (iii) the feasibility of introducing grass pathways through areas otherwise left uncut.

3 Items for Decision by the Board - Arrangements for the Council meeting on 25 June 2020

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to proposed arrangements for the Council meeting on 25 June 2020, taking into account the restrictions imposed on meetings by regulations and guidance to protect public health during the Covid-19 emergency. The report also advised of the work being undertaken to plan for appropriate governance arrangements to be put in place for the Council over the summer and for the next Board cycle in August and September 2020.

The report referred to the decision taken at the first meeting of the Emergencies Board on 20 March 2020 to cancel all Council and Board meetings up to 24 June 2020.

Following discussion with the political groups and parties on the Council, there was consensus that the scheduled meeting of the Council would go ahead on 25 June 2020. However, it was recognised that due to restrictions on social distancing and due to Renfrewshire House being closed, it was not possible to hold a meeting with members being present in the Council chamber. The report proposed therefore that the meeting would take place remotely with participants accessing the meeting through video link or by telephone connection. In addition, because decisions of public bodies such as local authorities should be taken in a manner that was open, transparent and subject to scrutiny and as the Council meeting would not be able to be open to the public, it would be recorded and the recording broadcast as soon as possible after the meeting.

The report highlighted that holding a meeting by Skype involving a large number of participants was challenging from a technical perspective and in these circumstances, the report recommended that where possible the number of participants was kept to a manageable number and that the procedure at the meeting was as straightforward as possible. Accordingly, the political groups had agreed that attendance at the remote meeting would be restricted to 21 members. The report intimated that the names of the attendees on behalf of each party should be intimated to the Head of Corporate Governance at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

It was noted that there would be a report to the Council meeting on 25 June in relation to the Council's governance arrangements over the summer and for the cycle of Board and other meetings in August and September 2020, including whether the Emergencies Board would meet over the summer period and, if so, how frequently; whether the membership of the Emergencies Board should be increased; the format for the Board meetings in August and September, including whether it would be possible to have a full cycle of meetings up to the Council meeting on 24 September 2020. All groups and political parties would be consulted in advance of the completion of the Council report.

DECIDED:

- (a) That it be agreed that the Council meeting on 25 June 2020 would go ahead with members attending the meeting remotely either through an audio or audio/visual link with the meeting being recorded for broadcast as soon as possible after the conclusion of the meeting;
- (b) That the other arrangements for the Council meeting as set out in paragraphs 3.4 to 3.7 of the report be noted;
- (c) That the plans being considered for effective governance over the summer period and for the next cycle of Board meetings in August and September 2020 as detailed in paragraph 3.8;
- (d) That it be noted that a report would be submitted to the Council meeting to be held on 25 June 2020 to approve those arrangements.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Board resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the press and public were present, there could be disclosure to them of confidential information.

4 Confidential Updates

The Board heard from the Chief Executive.

DECIDED: That the confidential update be noted.