

Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 22 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 McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, L Mahon, Head of Communications & Marketing and P Fara, Web & Multi-media Editor (all 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 and C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager (both Communities, Housing & Planning Services); K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, P Murray, Head of ICT; L Neary, Head of Transformation, HR & OD, M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager and D Low, Democratic Services Manager (all Finance & Resources); D Leese, Chief Officer and S Strachan, Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley) (both 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 15 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, COVID-19 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 showed that the rate of increase in deaths from COVID-19 was beginning to slow. A summary was also given of policy and guidance updates that had been released since the previous meeting of the Board on 15 May 2020. It was noted that as at 21 May 2020 there were 250,908 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in hospitals in the UK up from 233,151 reported on 15 May 2020. In Scotland there were now 14,856 confirmed hospital cases (up from 14,117). Of these, 3,806 cases were within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area (up from 3,628). In GGCHB area there were 400 people in hospital (down from 473) of which 16 were in intensive care (down from 26) as either confirmed or suspected cases.

The report intimated that there had now been 36,042 deaths across the UK (up from the 33,614 deaths reported on 15 May 2020). The UK still ranked second for overall numbers of recorded deaths, behind the United States where over 93,000 deaths had been recorded (283 per million population). When considering the number of deaths in relation to population size (removing countries with very small populations) the UK currently still ranked 4th with 521 deaths per million population, behind Belgium (790 deaths per million population), Spain (594 deaths per million population) and Italy (532 deaths per million population). The latest National Records of Scotland report showed that at 17 May 2020, there had been a total of 3,546 deaths registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate (up from 3,213 deaths registered up to 10 May 2020).

The report highlighted some positive indicators in relation to the response to the outbreak in Scotland. Of the total number of deaths registered in the week from 11 to 17 May 2020, there were 332 where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate, a decrease of 83 from the previous week. This was the third weekly reduction since the first COVID-19 death was registered in March. The proportion of all deaths involving COVID-19 had also decreased for the third week in a row falling from 36% of all deaths registered in the week ending 26 April 2020 to 23% of all deaths in week ending 17 May 2020. Appendix 1 provided an overview of all deaths involving COVID-19 in Renfrewshire.

The Chief Executive referred to paragraph 3.7 of the report which set out the content of the First Minister's announcement in the Scottish Parliament on 21 May 2020 setting out a phased process that was planned to allow the lockdown to be eased over future weeks and months. The key stages set out in this plan were detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

The report highlighted the work being undertaken by the Emergency Management Team to respond to the pandemic; the role of the Corporate Management Team to support recovery planning at a strategic level; the preparation of mobilisation plans by Health Boards across Scotland; the support being provided for communities and provided information in relation to Care Homes and safeguarding and supporting vulnerable residents being looked after in their own homes; included up to date figures on the numbers and types of support being provided to some of the most vulnerable residents in Renfrewshire; a workforce planning update for the Council, including the current position in relation to availability of PPE; on employee testing procedures; the current position in relation to the impact of absence on the availability of employees; redeployment of staff into priority front-line roles; information on the Test, Trace, Isolate and Support contact tracing process; and the plans to reopen Household Waste Recycling Centres.

The Board heard from the Chief Executive in relation to the report in general and in particular to the situation in Renfrewshire where deaths involving COVID-19 were above the national average and on the recovery arrangements; from the Chief Officer, Renfrewshire HSCP, relative to the implementation of new arrangements intended to strengthen oversight of care home activities during the current pandemic; from the Head of Corporate Governance relative to progress of the Coronavirus (No2) (Scotland) Bill through the Scottish Parliament and, in particular, to the element of the Bill which would, once enacted, introduce a power for local authorities and health bodies to purchase: care homes; care at home services; or the assets or liabilities of either, under certain circumstances; from the Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley) in relation to the situation within care homes and care at home services; and from the Communities & Regulatory Manager in relation to the ongoing 'Test and Protect' programme to test, trace, isolate and support.

The Director of Children's Services provided an overview of one of the key elements of the Scottish Government's recovery from the lockdown strategy, advising that those teachers who were able to would return to schools in June to ensure schools were ready to receive children and young people and that all appropriate measures had been put in place to protect both children and staff. Schools would reopen to pupils on 11 August 2020 and teaching would take the form of a blended approach of learning at home and in school. The Director advised that all the plans being developed were dependent upon continued progress against the effects of COVID-19 and that further updates would be provided to the Emergencies Board.

The Director of Environment & Infrastructure advised that, subject to Scottish Government confirmation, all five Renfrewshire household waste recycling sites would reopen from 1 June 2020, initially accepting bagged household waste only. The report set out the opening schedule for the five centres, the types of waste that would be accepted as the re-opening programme progressed and the measures which would be implemented to ensure social distancing was being maintained and to mitigate health and infrastructure issues.

Officers responded to members' questions. It was proposed that the Director of Environment & Infrastructure investigate how volunteers could be utilised to contribute to the maintenance and cutting of grassed areas and verges and submit a report on this matter to the next meeting of the Emergencies Board. 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; and
- (c) That the Director of Environment & Infrastructure investigate how volunteers could be utilised to contribute to the maintenance and cutting of grassed areas and verges and submit a report on this matter to the next meeting of the Emergencies Board.

3 Items for Decision by the Board

It was noted that there were no items for decision by the Board.

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

It was noted that there were no confidential updates.