

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 17 April 2020	11:00	Skype Meeting,

KENNETH GRAHAM  
Head of Corporate Governance

### Recording of Meeting of Emergencies Board: 17 April 2020

<https://youtu.be/gAgBF4Rh2as>

### Membership

Councillor Eddie Devine: Councillor Alistair Mackay: Councillor Iain Nicolson:  
Councillor Marie McGurk (Convener): Councillor Michelle Campbell (Depute Convener):

### Chair

### In Attendance

### Recording of Meetings

### Next and Future Meetings

### Apologies

Apologies from members.

### Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare an interest in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest.

## **Items of business**

- |          |  |               |
|----------|--|---------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Minute of Previous Meeting</b>                                | <b>3 - 6</b>  |
|          | Minute of Meeting of the Emergencies Board held on 9 April 2020. |               |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Update on COVID 19</b>  | <b>7 - 20</b> |
|          | Report by Chief Executive  |               |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Items for Decision by the Board</b>                           |               |

### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Board may by resolution exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the press and public are present, there could be disclosure to them of confidential information.

- |          |                             |
|----------|-----------------------------|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Confidential Updates</b> |
|          | Hear reports from Services  |

## Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 09 April 2020	11:00	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 and L Mahon, Head of Communications & Marketing (both Chief Executive's); J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice (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, L Neary, Head of Transformation, HR & OD, P Murray, Head of ICT, 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.

### Declarations of Interest

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in item 2 on the agenda as she was an employee with 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 meeting of the Emergencies Board held on 3 April 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 intimated that there were now 55,242 confirmed cases of Covid – 19 in the UK up from 33,718 reported on 3 April 2020. There had been 6,159 deaths across the UK (up from 2,921 in the last report). In Scotland there were now 4,565 confirmed cases (up from 2,602) and 366 deaths (up from 126). Of these, 1,166 cases were within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board Area (up from 682). In GGCHB area there were 555 people in hospital at midnight on Tuesday night (62 in intensive care) as either confirmed or suspected cases.

In response to this rapidly developing position, the Government had continued the “lock down” for the population. A number of nationally driven operational issues have been focused on over the past week as a key part of the Council and partners' response to the pandemic and to protect and support local residents. This included the extension of the death registration service from five days a week to seven days a week including the forthcoming Easter bank holiday; continued support for 'shielded' residents; the redeployment of staff; the introduction of the Food Fund and other assistance; and volunteering.

The report provided a focus on two specific areas: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Covid-19 testing. The Acting Head of Health and Social Care (Paisley), Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership provided an update on the provision off PPE to HSCP employees in accordance with national guidance issued on 2 April 2020. The Chief Officer, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership, provided information on the development of a testing system in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS area which had been rolled out to constituent CHPs. The testing was designed for employees who were not displaying symptoms but were isolating because they resided with someone who was self-isolating. This testing regime was quite different to the testing station established at Glasgow Airport by the Scottish and UK governments and which was intended for use by Scottish Ambulance Service and NHS 24 staff.

The report provided service updates and highlighted a reduction in the number of Renfrewshire Council employees who were self-isolating.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That the current national and local situation with regards to Covid-19 and the current plans and guidance from both the UK and Scottish Governments be noted; and

(b) That the current position and response measures being put in place by the Council and partners be noted.

### **3 Licensing Contingency Measures**

Under reference to item 3 of the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 3 April 2020, when the Board had considered the terms of a report on Licensing Contingency Measures and had decided that the report be continued for further consideration of appropriate delegations to officers, there was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to a revised process in relation to consideration of some licensing applications.

The report intimated that since the last meeting of this Board, the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 had received Royal Assent and the licensing provisions of that Act were now in force. The Act made a number of changes to licensing practice under the terms of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. However, a number of other emergency measures still remained to be implemented to ensure that the Council was able to meet its statutory obligations in relation to the determination of licence applications. This report outlined proposals to change policies and procedures for dealing with some licensing applications in the absence of meetings of the Regulatory Functions Board.

The report advised that the majority of licensing applications could already be determined by officers using delegated powers, as they had not resulted in any objection and sought a licence in accordance with the licensing policies of the Council. The Licensing Service would continue to deal with and process those licensing applications already received but new licence applications would not be accepted. With the provisions of the 2020 Act now in force, the Council had an additional three months to determine most applications made under the terms of the 1982 Act. Following investigation, officers had ascertained that most applications which could not be granted by officers would be able to be considered by Board following the Council's summer recess, due to the additional three-month extension period allowed by the 2020 Act. However, it was considered necessary to temporarily change the Scheme of Delegated Functions to authorise officers to grant HMO licences for a restricted period of 6 months in limited circumstances.

Many of the licences which came under the remit of the Regulatory Functions Board expired after either a one, two or three-year period. In order to relieve pressure on both licence holders/applicants and the Licensing team, the report recommended that the Council's policy on the period of grant of licences be varied, and that the officers specified at paragraph 3.9 of the report also be given power to extend any licence which was otherwise to expire on or before 30 June 2020 for a period of three calendar months. A record of such decisions would be retained and reported to the next meeting of the Regulatory Functions Board.

The report intimated that a number of requests had been made by taxi and private hire operators seeking that, due to the downturn in trade, they be allowed to reduce their current insurance cover to social, domestic and pleasure use on the basis that they would, on a temporary basis, no longer undertake public or private hire. This was not permitted under current Council Policy and officers had been unable to agree to such requests. Accordingly, the report recommended that officers be allowed to authorise a temporary cessation of the licence upon receipt of a request in writing from the licence holder. The licence holder would be required to remove their plates upon granting of the cessation and this would then permit the licence holder to use their vehicle for personal use only.

Police Scotland would be notified of the temporary cessation and operation of the Licence could only resume upon public or private hire insurance being exhibited.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That authority be delegated to the Head of Corporate Governance, Legal and Democratic Services Manager and Assistant Managing Solicitor (Licensing), in consultation with the Convener (or Depute Convener) of the Regulatory Functions Board and one member from each other political grouping represented on that Board, to grant applications for House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licences for a period of six months in limited circumstances where reports could not be completed in relation to the suitability of the premises, provided no other adverse representations had been received;

(b) That powers be delegated to the officers specified at paragraph 2.1.1 of the report to extend the duration of any licence falling within the remit of the Regulatory Functions Board, which would otherwise expire on or before 30 June 2020, for a period of three months;

(c) That a temporary policy be introduced permitting the temporary cessation of Taxi and Private Hire Car Licences where requested by the vehicle operator; and

(d) That it be noted that any other application that was contrary to an existing policy of the Council or subject to objections would continue to be referred to Board in line with existing practice.

**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 Chief Executive gave the Board an update in relation to national and local issues arising from the Covid-19 emergency and the Board heard from the Communities and Regulatory Manager.

**DECIDED:** That the update be noted.



---

**To:               Emergencies Board**

**On:               17 April 2020**

---

**Report by:    Chief Executive**

---

**Heading:      Update on COVID-19**

---

## **1.     Background**

- 1.1    This report provides an overview of the Council's current arrangements and response to the ongoing international Coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.2    An update is provided on the numbers of cases and deaths at both Scottish and UK levels and in particular notes the recent publication of figures and analysis from the National Records of Scotland which highlight the number of deaths that are happening within Care Homes – currently around 25% of all COVID-19 related deaths recorded.
- 1.3    Section 4 of the report highlights the support being provided for communities and provides up to date figures for the numbers and types of support provided to the most vulnerable “shielded” group of residents and the establishment of a national helpline to allow other vulnerable residents to access support where they may not have access to families or existing community support. Information is also provided on the arrangements in place to ensure that the procedures and safeguards to protect vulnerable adults and children remain strong and that oversight of these arrangements is maintained throughout the period of this pandemic.
- 1.4    Section 5 highlights the support being provided to local businesses – providing details on the numbers of small business grants already distributed and of around £220 million of additional support that has recently been announced and will be available for businesses and the self employed from the end of the month.
- 1.5    Section 6 outlines the key operational changes that have been made within the Council and its key partners to respond to the pandemic – protecting employees and protecting the organisation. In particular, it provides an update on the current position in relation to availability of PPE, the guidance being followed in terms of

its use, and the procedures in place to secure supplies at a time when the supply chain for PPE is under significant pressure. This section also contains an update on the temporary suspension of the Council Change programme and the development of a temporary redeployment process to assist employees to be focused on supporting and delivering priority and critical services. The current position in relation to the impact of shielding procedures and absence on the availability of employees is also provided.

- 1.6 Section 7 provides a short update on service changes that have not previously been reported in relation to the HSPC, Children's Services and Communities Housing and Planning.
  - 1.7 Section 8 provides a short Communications update highlighting the current focus on maintaining public information channels and the website; and communicating to staff regarding the Right for Renfrewshire programme and how employees in essential services can access PPE.
- 

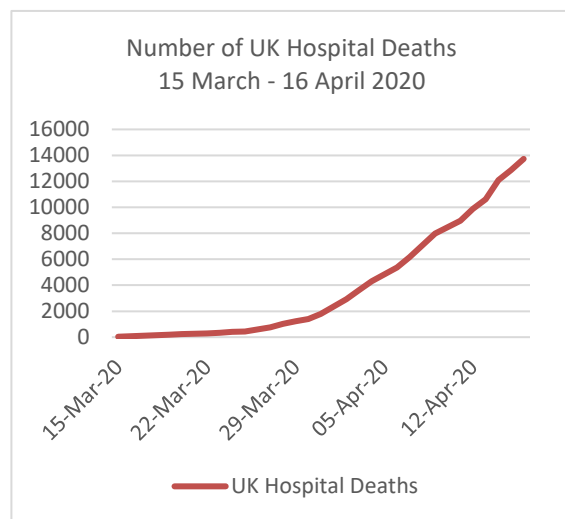
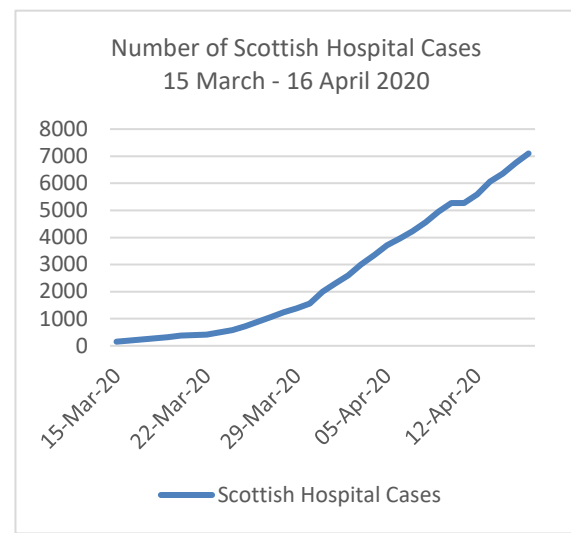
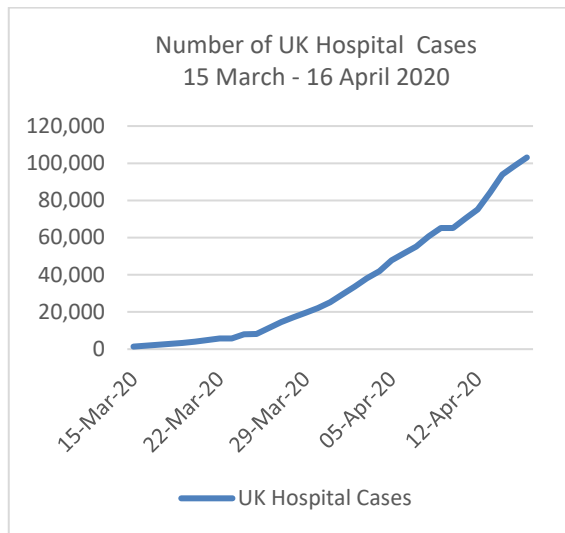
## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Emergencies Board:
    - (a) Note the current national and local situation with regards to COVID-19 and the impact on communities, businesses and the Council and its partners
    - (b) Note the response measures being put in place by the Council and partners as set out in this report
- 

## **3. National Situation**

- 3.1 Currently there are 103,093 confirmed cases of COVID – 19 in hospitals in the UK up from 55,242 reported on 9 April 2020. There have been 13,729 deaths in hospital across the UK (up from 6,159 in the last report). In Scotland there are now 7,102 confirmed hospital cases (up from 4,565) and 779 deaths (up from 366). Of these, 1,742 cases are within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area (up from 1,166).
- 3.2 In GGCHB area there were 606 people in hospital (up from 555) (70 in intensive care – up from 62) as either confirmed or suspected cases. The following graphs illustrate the significant increase in both cases and deaths since 15 March 2020.





- 3.3 What the graphs above clearly demonstrate is that while the overall numbers reflect the population differences across the UK and Scotland and are therefore very different in magnitude in relation to hospital recorded cases and deaths, the trend and escalation in numbers of cases and deaths in Scotland is very similar to the picture seen across the rest of the UK.
- 3.4 Up to now the data presented and available for analysis has been based on hospital cases. This has been because this has been viewed as the most robust and accurate source of data, as this is where the testing regime has been focused. In the last week however, the first report has been produced by the National Records of Scotland indicating the numbers of deaths registered in Scotland that note COVID-19 as a factor in the death. These figures show that as at 12 April 2020, there had been a total of 962 deaths registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. (The figure for hospital deaths reported at that time was 566)
- 3.5 The death registration statistics also reveal:
- Of the total number of deaths registered 6 to 12 April there were 608 where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate (30.9% of the total)
  - There was an increase of 326 from the previous week (30 March to 5 April)

- 25% of COVID-19 deaths registered to date related to deaths in care homes
- 62% of deaths were in hospitals
- 13% of deaths were at home or in non-institutional settings
- Almost 70% of all deaths involving COVID-19 to date were of people aged 75 or over

3.6 Members will be aware from recent media coverage and press briefings from UK government ministers that information from the rest of the UK demonstrates that this picture is not unique to Scotland and that the numbers of deaths recorded in care homes, in particular, appears to be consistently about 25% of the total numbers of COVID-19 related deaths recorded through death registration services.

## 4. Support for Communities

### Support for Shielded Residents

4.1 A total of 4,300 Group 1 “Shielded” Renfrewshire residents have been identified and written to by NHS Scotland. Support is being provided to this group as noted below:

	Total	Previous	Change since last week
Total number of individuals on shielding list in Renfrewshire	4300	3652	648
Total number of individuals on shielding list contacted	756		756
Number of individuals requiring food delivery only	760	173	587
Number of individuals requiring pharmacy delivery only	25	73	-48
Number of individuals requiring food and pharmacy	63	52	11
Number of individuals requiring other services	1	7	-6
Number of individuals in need of no services	540		540

4.2 When a resident on the Group 1 shielded list contacts the Council they are being encouraged to sign up for the national SMS service to receive Brakes food packages and other support including priority supermarket delivery slots as a matter of course. Shielded residents are also provided with Council food support where required.

4.3 A list of contact numbers for shielded residents was received on 12 April 2020 and this has allowed outbound welfare calls to be undertaken by the Local Assistance Team. So far, the success rate in contacting individuals is around 58%. This is in line with the experience nationally and reflects the fact that many vulnerable individuals do not answer the phone unless they recognise the caller’s number. Calls have also been received from people that have not received a shielding letter but believe they should be within the “shielded” group of people. The Local Assistance Team are working to reassure local people and access support from national leads on these issues wherever possible.

### **Group 2 National Helpline and Support for Vulnerable Residents**

- 4.4 Renfrewshire Council recognised early that a significant number of other residents are also vulnerable and put in place enhanced and integrated arrangements to support all vulnerable residents. Local Assistance Team arrangements have been established with a dedicated team of 19 Local Response Officers, 4 team leaders and 5 co-ordinators to provide essential practical support and a single point of contact 7 days per week. This team supports residents to access essential supplies of food and medicines as well as other practical support.
- 4.5 On 14 April 2020 a national helpline was established to direct a group of vulnerable individuals (Group 2) towards practical support, information or assistance during the lock down period. The helpline operates on weekdays and provides a route to support for people that are over 70, have certain medical conditions or are pregnant, and don't have access to family or existing community support.
- 4.6 Calls are being redirected to the relevant local authority. In Renfrewshire, requests for practical support are routed to the Local Assistance Team for fulfilment. Group 2 callers to the helpline are not able to access support from national food delivery mechanisms or through prioritised supermarket delivery slots like the shielded group. Support must be provided from local resources including Council, Health and Social Care Partnership and wider third sector and community provision. Any queries relating to social care provision are routed through existing social care intake routes, via ASeRT, to ensure the HSCP can respond where any critical level of need is identified. Support across all groups has been provided as noted below:

	<b>Group 1 Shielded</b>	<b>Group 2 Helpline</b>	<b>Other Vulnerable Groups</b>	<b>National Brakes Deliveries (Group 1 only)</b>	<b>Total Supported</b>
<b>Food</b>	160	346	516	600	Food - 1622
<b>Medicine</b>	25	211			Medicine - 236
<b>Other</b>	1	22			Other -22

### **Community Protection Arrangements**

- 4.7 The protection of Renfrewshire's most vulnerable children and adults remains a priority. Social work staff from both children's and adult services are maintaining regular contact with those identified as most vulnerable. In children's services social work staff continue to undertake home visits to those children who are on the child protection register; to children who are looked after at home and in relation to new referrals where necessary. All social work visits are being undertaken using appropriate social distancing measures and all staff have access to appropriate PPE. Referral rates to social work are lower than previously experienced and as such public messaging about the availability of the service are being stepped up. Children's services are operating a hub from St. James' Street and can schedule appointments where required for a small number of people unable to be visited at home or provided with advice via the telephone.

- 4.8 Planned face to face meetings of the Adult and Child Protection Committees and the Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group and Member Officer Group: Public Protection, have currently been suspended. Therefore, alternative arrangements have been established to ensure the continuation of appropriate oversight of adult and child protection arrangements. A sub-group of the Adult and Child Protection Committee has been established and meets regularly online to ensure an oversight of activity in relation to these protection and safeguarding issues.
- 4.9 An online meeting of the Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group is also scheduled for week commencing 27 April 2020 and will continue to be held regularly. The Chief Officers will receive reports on all areas of public protection allowing appropriate oversight and to maintain support to those delivering front-line protection services.
- 4.10 The communication teams in the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership are ensuring that messages on how to report concerns in relation to adult or child protection or domestic abuse are part of the ongoing public announcements and these have been reinforced directly with Council tenants through Housing.
- 4.11 In the Community Safety Partnership, Daily Tasking is continuing on a daily basis with Police and the Council triaging relevant incidents and ensuring they are passed to relevant agencies for action in line with the normal process. MARAC is also continuing to meet as normal using MS Teams to consider high risk domestic abuse cases. Arrangements have also been put in place to conduct Prevent Multi Agency Partnership (Counter Terrorism) case conferences if required, using the same technology.
- 4.12 The CCTV Hub continues to be staffed and public space cameras are fully operational, supported by targeted Wardens patrols in mobile CCTV vehicles. These patrols continue to be deployed to respond to incidences and hotspots identified through daily tasking and complaints. Incidences of fly tipping and noise enforcement are being responded to with fixed penalty notices for fly tipping and warnings for noise enforcement having been issued by letter where evidence permits.

## **5. Support for Businesses**

### **Business Grants and Reliefs**

- 5.1 Local Authorities are currently delivering 2 grant programmes on behalf of the Scottish Government. The schemes were launched on 24 March 2020 with guidance on assessing applications made available to Councils on 31 March 2020. The programmes are available for applications up to 31 March 2021:
- The first is a £10,000 grant for businesses in receipt of the small business bonus scheme aimed at supporting those in premises with a rateable value of up to £18,000 annually.
  - The second is a £25,000 grant for businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sector occupying premises with a rateable value of between £18,001 and £50,999 annually.

- 5.2 Since 1 April 2020 the Economic Development Team have been assessing applications and around 33% of the total allocation for the Renfrewshire area has been approved - the figures up to 14 April 2020 are as follows:

	No of applications received	No of grants awarded to date	No of grants rejected to date	Value of grants awarded
<b>Small Business Grant</b>	1,572	808	104	£8,080,000
<b>Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant</b>	232	77	39	£1,925,000
<b>Total for both grants</b>	1,804	885	143	£10,005,000

### **Second phase of funding to protect against the effects of COVID-19.**

- 5.3 On 15 April 2020 the Scottish Government announced that further grant support of around £220 million would be made available to support those businesses occupying multiple properties, those recently self-employed and to other businesses who don't qualify for the existing supports on offer. There are a number of businesses in Renfrewshire that might benefit from this grant support.
- 5.4 The new package of measures includes £120 million to extend the Small Business Grant scheme to ensure that, in addition to a 100% grant on the first property, small business rate payers will be eligible to a 75% grant on all subsequent properties.
- 5.5 A further £100 million fund is also being made available to protect self-employed people and viable micro and SME businesses in distress due to COVID-19. This fund will be channelled through local authorities and enterprise agencies to target newly self-employed people and businesses who are ineligible for other Scottish Government or UK Government schemes.
- 5.6 Applications for the £100 million fund will be open by the end of the month, and the new arrangements for the Small Business Grant will be in place to receive applications on 5 May.

## **6. Operational Changes and Support for Employees**

### **Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- 6.1 The updated guidance in relation to the use of PPE, confirmed the recommended PPE to use in a variety of clinical and community care settings and also reinforced the importance of good hygiene practices. A key change in the guidance clarified that secondary, primary and community care workers should wear a surgical mask when dealing with any individuals in the 'extremely vulnerable (shielded) group'. It also confirmed that social and home care workers can wear a fluid resistant face mask along with other appropriate PPE where the person they are visiting or otherwise attending to is neither confirmed nor suspected of having COVID19, if they consider doing so necessary to their own and the individual's safety.
- 6.2 The Council and HSCP are working together to ensure all frontline workers are clear on the current guidance and appropriately equipped. A group has been

established to have oversight of guidance as it is updated to ensure it is consistently applied. The COVID PPE Working Group will ensure consistency in the application PPE guidance across all workforces and also ensure that a consistent standard is applied across businesses the Council is responsible for advising and regulating. A range of communications are planned to ensure staff are clear on the guidance, when to use PPE and trained in the correct procedures for donning and doffing of PPE from experienced staff and through the use of video briefings.

- 6.3 The Council's Health and Safety team have worked with all relevant Council services to develop risk assessments which reflect PPE requirements, which will be kept under regular review. Further guidance was also published for working in non-healthcare settings which does not make recommendations relating to PPE but emphasises adherence to social distancing measures, good hygiene measures, infection prevention and controls and effective risk assessments.

#### **Sourcing and Stocks of PPE**

- 6.4 The corporate procurement unit (CPU) initially led the sourcing of PPE stocks for the Council and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (RHSCP). This covered PPE for all Council and care workers who were identified as requiring PPE.
- 6.5 NHS National Services Scotland (NSS) is now sourcing PPE for all Health and Social Care Partnerships. A local hub has been established at the Dykebar Hospital site and PPE supplies are being delivered to this central location allowing co-ordinated distribution to staff across Renfrewshire. Deliveries to the hub include the allocation of PPE to external registered care providers. At the time of writing, the Hub has supplies for approximately 5 days and is continuing to make orders and receive deliveries. Given the changes to national PPE guidance from 2 April 2020, it continues to be a challenge to maintain sufficient stocks of certain PPE elements, however, to date, the HSCP and Council has always been able to ensure that staff are sufficiently and appropriately equipped.
- 6.6 Currently the Health and Social Care Partnership are also including the requirements of some key Council services e.g extra care housing and community meals in their orders to ensure that all workers have access to PPE of the same quality standard.
- 6.7 The corporate procurement unit continues to support both the Council and Health and Social Care Partnership with the sourcing and supply of any additional PPE required. This is essential in order to ensure that best value is achieved in a highly competitive market where some suppliers have vastly inflated their prices.
- 6.8 Orders have been placed with 2 suppliers for over 600,000 IIR Face Masks to be delivered by the end of April. The face masks are manufactured in China and are subject to a very competitive market. Procurement are in regular contact with the suppliers to ensure that orders have been dispatched however the suppliers have warned that air freight prices are rapidly rising and that there could be a cost implication if the cost to the supplier significantly increases.
- 6.9 In the last week Scotland Excel have met with Solace, Scottish Government and NSS to offer assistance with the sourcing of PPE. Scotland Excel are currently

working with Councils to establish a baseline of likely weekly requirements following which they will provide more information about the level of support they could offer. The proposal is that they could provide a central interface between local authorities and suppliers, possibly providing a web-based portal to facilitate easier ordering.

### **Council Change Programme**

- 6.10 Given the seriousness of the Coronavirus outbreak and the impact it continues to have on residents, businesses and our workforce, the Right for Renfrewshire transformation programme has been put on hold to allow all Council employees to focus their attention and resources on responding to the outbreak and continuing to deliver agreed priority services. This means that the operational changes due to be developed and implemented in this financial year 2020/21, as part of the initial six Right for Renfrewshire service designs will be delayed.
- 6.11 This decision means that services will not be able to make the operational changes that were enabling the release of staff under the terms of the Council's Voluntary Redundancy and Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme. Without these changes in place the Council risks placing additional pressure on its remaining workforce, contradicting the very principles of its change programme.
- 6.12 As a result, employees with a formally agreed release date for VR/VER as part of Right for Renfrewshire, will be asked to postpone their leaving date and remain in the Council's employment until March 31, 2021. This will also help to strengthen the current capacity of services as they respond in this exceptionally challenging period. The decision to postpone will be at the discretion of each individual and will be based on their own personal circumstances. All other live change programmes and VR/VER expressions of interest will also be put on hold until the Council returns to more normal operating conditions.
- 6.13 This will impact on around 180 members of staff, due to leave the Council from June, all of whom will be kept fully updated. Trade Unions are also being kept fully informed of this development.

### **Redeployment Programme**

- 6.14 A corporate redeployment process to support the deployment of staff who are in non-critical roles that are willing to be deployed temporarily into critical services has now been established.
- 6.15 This is supported by a resource tracker tool that identifies all staff in the organisation; whether or not they are in a critical or non-critical role; whether they are able and willing to be deployed to another role; and key information that will allow skills and experience to be matched with roles. An HR team has been set up to manage this process and to support managers in continuing to gather this information and keep it up to date.
- 6.16 The process is administered through a central mailbox and supported by health and safety to ensure staff deployed into roles are given appropriate health and safety briefings or training as appropriate. So far 66 staff have been identified for deployment into a variety of temporary roles including Drivers, Call handlers/ Team leaders and Coordinators and Neighbourhood Hub Coordinators.

- 6.17 In addition to this, Renfrewshire Leisure staff have been deployed into critical Council services. Already approximately 14 Renfrewshire Leisure employees have provided Food Packing Support and 22 employees are providing back up passenger transport to support refuse collections whilst maintaining social distancing. Additionally, around 12 employees per day have been supporting the childcare programme for children of essential workers.

### **Council Staffing Update**

- 6.18 Amongst Renfrewshire Council employees there are currently 622 employees self-isolating either because they have symptoms; or because they have other people in their household experiencing symptoms; or because they are following government and health guidance. (This is an increase from 603 reported on 9 April 2020). Of the 622, 215 are currently working from home.
- 6.19 The 622 are split across Services as follows:

Service	Number of employees
Chief Executive Services	6
Children's Services	272
Communities, Housing and Planning	36
Environment and Infrastructure	139
Finance and Resources	63
Health and Social Care Partnership	106
<b>Council Total</b>	<b>622</b>

- 6.20 The number of employees now being "shielded from social contact" in line with government and health guidance is 1,028, up from the figure of 1,022 reported on 9 April 2020. Of these 442 are currently working from home. Where employees are not able to carry out their normal duties from home, options for redeployment on a home working basis are being actively considered and put in place.
- 6.21 Guidance on annual leave and public holidays, health and well-being and working from home has been issued across the workforce.

## **7. Service Updates**

- 7.1 Relevant service updates on specific issues that have not been reported before are included below:

### **Service Update – Health and Social Care Partnership**

- Health and social care services are being delivered to people with the most critical levels of need only. All services continue to be stable however the HSCP continues to proactively manage capacity and demand pressures, on a daily basis, including deploying staff to critical services where appropriate.
- As noted in section 3 [above] there are a growing number of people who are symptomatic or who have died with COVID-19 related symptoms. There has been a marked change in the Renfrewshire position in respect of both COVID-19 positive/symptomatic residents and COVID-19 related deaths over the last week. The position is subject to frequent change given the nature of transmission and the short period of acute illness.



- In the care at home services at the time of writing there are a small but growing number of people living within their own homes with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and being supported by staff.
- Renfrewshire has 22 care homes with an available bed capacity of 1320 spaces. At the time of writing the three care homes operated by the HSCP have no reported COVID-19 related symptoms or related deaths. These are residential care homes where the residents tend to be in better health than the resident group in the Nursing Home sector who are often receiving end of life care and have complex needs including dementia. Of the 22 care homes 7 are self-reporting residents with COVID-19 related symptoms and COVID-19 related deaths.
- A number of steps have been taken to ensure that assistance and support is offered to the Nursing Homes within Renfrewshire. This includes –
  - Daily contact with all care home by the contracts team to ensure that they have full PPE supplies in place and to seek information on any COVID-19 related issues affecting residents
  - Daily contact by the enhanced nurse led Care Home Liaison service to offer advice and support
  - Just in Case medication pack supplies in each care home to ensure end of life care and supporting medication can be offered immediately
  - Discussion with the GPs locally via the GP lead and Clinical Director to ensure awareness of the situation for each care home and to support recording of any COVID-19 related infection and recording of death
  - Discussion and regular contact with the Care Inspectorate who are the formal reporting point for all incidents and deaths for all Care Homes to share information and ensure a consistent response
  - Contact with Public Health Scotland to confirm that advice and reporting has taken place in relation to any infection
  - Daily meetings [via Skype] of the Locality Management Team to actively monitor and respond to the changing situation for all providers
  - Work across the Health Board area with the other HSCPs to provide consistent support to care homes and to improve reporting

### **Service Update – Children’s Services**

- Hub schools and nurseries have continued to offer provision for emergency childcare for key workers over the Easter break including Good Friday and Easter Monday. The school centres offering this facility to primary and secondary children are, West Primary, St Mary’s Primary, St James Primary (Renfrew), Trinity High School and West Johnstone Campus. Nursery aged children are attending Hugh Smiley Nursery, Moorpark Nursery and West Johnstone Nursery. In addition, Riverbrae School has remained open to support children of key workers who have additional support needs. The number of children has decreased over the Easter period but all children whose parents meet the criteria have a place ready for them after the holiday period.
- After the Easter break, secondary school teaching staff will continue their work on determining estimated grades based on SQA guidance, for all pupils who were being presented for national qualifications. There will be support in place to ensure the estimated grades are validated at all levels before being sent to SQA by the due date of 29<sup>th</sup> May.
- All schools will continue to support the learning of children and young people through remote learning after the holiday period. Many new and creative

ways have been developed to do this. A particular focus is being placed on providing support to children and young people who do not have access to the necessary technology.

- The children's houses continue to provide safe care for the young people living in them with no significant challenges being experienced at this time. The fostering and adoption service continues to provide support to Renfrewshire's foster carers. The kinship care team remain in regular contact with carers to provide support and assistance where required.
- Criminal justice services continue to supervise those subject to statutory orders in the community. At present the unpaid work scheme remains suspended and the emergency legislation provides for an extension to the period of those required to undertake unpaid work to allow the completion of orders, once the current crisis is over. The staff from the unpaid work team are assisting in other areas of work including supporting community pharmacists with delivery of prescriptions.

### **Service Update – Communities Housing and Planning**

- A comprehensive tenant information leaflet was developed and sent to all 12,000 council tenants giving helpful information about changes to services and key contact numbers as well as other information about support that is available.
- Since the offices closed there have been 149 calls to homeless services which have resulted in 35 homeless applications this is slightly below the usual number of presentations when comparing the same period over the last 2 years. Homeless Services are continuing to prioritise securing temporary accommodation to ensure that we remain able to provide assistance with accommodation when required.
- 280 morning welfare calls are made to sheltered housing tenants every day. In addition, the 'Befriending' service delivered by the health and wellbeing coordinators makes 116 calls to tenants each week who have wanted to use this initiative to combat loneliness.
- 103 food parcels donated by 'Morrisons' have been delivered to Sheltered Housing tenants.
- Weekly online quizzes, exercise sessions, and digital experiences including Virtual Tours on Facebook are becoming more popular each week with excellent feedback from tenants.

## **8. Communications Update**

- 8.1 Public information continues to be planned and communicated across Council, partner and community channels on a daily basis, in line with national guidance and new/emerging policies. This includes the use of Council newsletters to residents, businesses and school communities. A key focus is on promoting Stay Home guidance and providing daily reminders about the support available to local people and local businesses to help them cope with the crisis – from financial advice and assistance to wellbeing support. Daily briefings are provided to elected members Monday to Friday to provide a snapshot of all public information activity.
- 8.2 The Council website is a main channel of communication for staff and residents and is updated each day to provide the latest information on Coronavirus. The aim is to help answer questions from residents quickly and direct them to appropriate support online or via the contact centre. A weekly staff newsletter is published with

the latest advice and support for staff and to update them on Council operations, with daily two-way communications facilitated through a number of comms channels.

- 8.3 A key focus this week and next, is communication to staff regarding the Right for Renfrewshire programme and how essential services can access PPE.

---

### Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – although at this stage not quantified, the Council will experience a wide range of significant financial pressures arising from the impact of the pandemic on the population as well as the economic and social disruption caused by the associated restrictions being deployed by national governments. Significant financial pressures will emerge in a wide range of forms from loss of income, exceptional service costs, significant increase in demand for services, the need for additional and new interventions, urgent and immediate support arrangements and services from the Council to help individuals, families and businesses across Renfrewshire as well as the Council's workforce. The Scottish Government has provided a range of immediate funding announcements to provide specific support via local authorities to both individuals and businesses as well as a degree of general funding to assist local authorities in managing immediate financial pressures. Engagement will continue between COSLA and the Scottish Government regarding further funding as the period of emergency extends, however notwithstanding, the Council will experience significant financial impact and disruption that will require it to draw heavily on all its financial reserves and which is likely to take some time to recover
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – the Council's workforce represents a major part of the local population and as such is being impacted directly by the spread of confirmed cases, but much more significantly by the public health directions for self-isolation given to those displaying symptoms and those with family members displaying symptoms as well as those in the at risk groups instructed to pro-actively implement strict social distancing arrangements. Full support and communication are being provided to all staff members to ensure they remain fully informed of the developing situation and where appropriate and practical, are being supported to work safely at home and or safely return to active work once recovered or free of recommended self-isolation periods. The impact of these factors will increase exponentially over coming days and weeks and therefore the scale of availability across the Council's workforce will come under unprecedented pressures. Working closely with national government, partners and trade unions the Council will by necessity be required to actively manage and redeploy staffing resources to meet the most critical services over this exception emergency period.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Covid-19 will impact on the operations of Council partners and on services to the community. This paper highlights the work being undertaken to mitigate this impact as far as possible and maintain essential services for the safety and wellbeing of the community.
4. **Legal** – N/A
5. **Property/Assets** – N/A

6. **Information Technology** – ICT are working to ensure staff have the capability to work from home wherever possible to reduce social contact in line with government and health guidance
  7. **Equality & Human Rights**
    - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
  8. **Health & Safety** – Advice and guidance is being given to protect the health and safety of employees and service users when carrying out priority services for the Council in line with government and health guidance
  9. **Procurement** – N/A
  10. **Risk** – Due to the severity of the global pandemic and Covid-19, there is a risk to the delivery of the services with staff levels being reduced. This is being closely monitored by the Emergency Management Team. Business Continuity Plans have been reviewed and the risk has been added to the Corporate Risk Register.
  11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
  12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable
  13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable
- 

#### **List of Background Papers**

None

---

**Author:** Oliver Reid, Head of Communities and Public Protection.

**Email:** [oliver.reid@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:oliver.reid@renfrewshire.gov.uk)