

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 17 July 2020	14:00	Skype meeting,

KENNETH GRAHAM  
Head of Corporate Governance

### Membership

Councillor Jacqueline Cameron: Councillor Eddie Devine: Councillor Andy Doig: Councillor Jim Harte: Councillor Alistair Mackay: Councillor Eileen McCartin: Councillor Cathy McEwan: Councillor John McIntyre: Councillor Iain Nicolson: Councillor Jim Paterson: Councillor John Shaw: Councillor James Sheridan: Councillor Andy Steel:  
Councillor Marie McGurk (Convener): Councillor Michelle Campbell (Depute Convener):

### Recording of Meeting

This meeting will be recorded for subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 07534 058160. To find the recording please follow the link which will be attached to this agenda once the meeting has concluded. Please note that only meetings of the Emergencies Board from 17 April 2020 onward have been recorded for broadcast.

### Recording of Skype Meeting of the Emergencies Board: 17 July 2020

<https://youtu.be/Uw78s9x4XVw>

### 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 - 8</b>  |
|          | Minute of Meeting of the Emergencies Board held on 3 July 2020. |               |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Update on Covid 19</b>                                       | <b>9 - 40</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 from Chief Executive   |

## Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 03 July 2020	14:00	Skype meeting,

### Present

Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Eddie Devine, Councillor Jim Harte, Councillor Alistair Mackay, Councillor Eileen McCartin, Councillor Cathy McEwan, Councillor Marie McGurk, Councillor John McIntyre, Councillor Iain Nicolson, Councillor Jim Paterson, Councillor John Shaw, Councillor James Sheridan, Councillor Andy Steel

### 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 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); 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 Manager, 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.

## **Apology**

Councillor Andy Doig.

## **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 19 June 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, locally, one COVID-19 death had been recorded in hospital in Renfrewshire in the week to 29 June 2020. Three COVID-19 deaths had been recorded in hospital in the previous week to 22 June 2020. Both figures represented a significant reduction from the peak recorded in the week to 27 April 2020 when 40 deaths were recorded in Renfrewshire. During the previous week, up to 29 June 2020, there were four successive days when no COVID-19 deaths were reported in Scotland. Since 1 June 2020 overall numbers of deaths in Renfrewshire had been in line with the 5-year average. This represented a significant reduction from the peak recorded during the week to 27 April 2020 when almost 60 deaths above average levels were recorded in Renfrewshire. Deaths in Care Homes in Renfrewshire were below the 5-year average up to 30 March 2020, but then peaked during the pandemic remaining above average levels till week commencing 25 May 2020.

The report advised that new cases identified in the UK peaked around 7 May 2020 at approximately 6,000 cases per day and since then numbers identified had declined steadily. Currently just under 1,000 new cases per day were being identified in the UK. New cases identified in Scotland peaked twice, in late April and in early May at just over 270 new cases per day. Since then cases identified had declined steadily and currently around 10 new cases were being identified per day across Scotland.

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 19 June 2020. It was noted that there were currently 313,483 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in hospitals in the UK up from 300,469 reported on 19 June 2020. In Scotland there were now 18,259 confirmed hospital cases (up from 18,077). Of these, 4,858 cases were within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area (up from 4,813). In GGCHB area there were 199 people in hospital (down from 249) with fewer than five in intensive care as either confirmed or suspected cases.

The report intimated that there had now been 43,906 deaths across the UK (up from the 42,288 deaths reported on 19 June 2020). The UK ranked third for overall numbers of recorded deaths, behind both Brazil and the United States. The latest National Records of Scotland report showed that at 14 June 2020, there had been a total of 4,155 deaths registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate – up 35 from 4,070 deaths registered up to 21 June 2020. In Renfrewshire, a total of 205 people had died with COVID-19 since the outbreak of the virus. Of this total figure, 98 had died in care homes, 98 in hospital and nine at home or other non-institutional locations.

The report detailed the work being done nationally to make the case for additional funding and/or financial flexibility to support local authorities in meeting the financial implications arising from COVID-19 over coming years. Current estimates indicated a possible full year impact for 2020/21 of up to £55 million for the Council, with additional funding announced of around £9.5 million to begin to address this impact.

The report provided an update on the Council's services in terms of the Scottish Government's recovery plan including the full reopening of schools and early years services in August, under guidance expected soon from the Scottish Government, with the plans already made to deliver a blended model being retained as a contingency. A firm decision on which approach to follow would be based on wider progress with suppressing the virus and the decision would be made by the Scottish Government by the end of July 2020. A copy of the Education Recovery Plan submitted to Education Scotland on 24 June 2020 was attached as Appendix 3 to the report. The report also provided information in relation to support for businesses; household waste recycling; grass cutting; spaces for people and cycling; support for care at home, and for shielded and vulnerable people and oversight of care homes; test and protect arrangements; and support for employees.

The report referred to plans being put in place for the next round of Local Partnership meetings to take place using an online platform such as Skype or MS Teams. The Partnerships and Inequalities Team, along with other Council services, would work with the Chair of each Local Partnership to develop arrangements to support participation and the Head of Policy and Commissioning would contact all Local Partnership Chairs to schedule the next round of meetings from mid-September 2020.

Members heard from the Chief Executive in response to Members' questions on Council contracts and funding issues; from the Director of Finance and Resources in relation to the administration and repurposing of funding available to the Council; from the Director of Environment and Infrastructure in relation to the grass cutting programme, the cleaning of schools and the operation of Household Waste Recycling Centres; from the Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley) in relation to testing arrangements in care homes;

from the Head of Policy and Commissioning in relation to the resumption of Local Partnership meetings; and from the Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice and Chief Social Work Officer in relation to domestic abuse.

**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 the Education Recovery Plan submitted to Education Scotland on 24 June 2020 and attached as Appendix 3 to this report be noted; and
- (d) That it be agreed that the next round of Local Partnership meetings take place virtually through an online platform such as Skype or MS Teams with arrangements being made to support participation as set out in Section 7 of the report.

### **3 Arrangements for Meetings of the Emergencies Board**

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance and Resources relative to the arrangements for future meetings of the Emergencies Board.

The report referred to the meeting of Council held on 25 June 2020 when it was agreed that arrangements for the Emergencies Board should be finalised by agreement with members of the Board on two issues: the time for the start of the board meetings and the arrangement of dates of the meetings to avoid clashing with the dates of COSLA Leaders meetings and the Paisley Fair holiday weekend.

To address these issues, paragraph 3.6 of the report proposed that after the planned meetings on 3 and 17 July, the Emergencies Board meeting on 31 July be postponed until the following Friday, 7 August 2020. Subsequent meetings of the Board would take place every two weeks following that date up until the Council meeting on 24 September 2020. This would mean that there were no meetings of the Emergencies Board on the dates of the COSLA Leaders meetings. All of the meetings would take place at 2 pm.

**DECIDED:** That the arrangements for dates of future meetings of the Board set out in paragraph 3.6 of the report with all meetings of the Board starting at 2.00 pm be approved.

### **4 Items for Decision by the Board**

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

### **5 Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Emergencies Board would be held at 2.00 pm on 17 July 2020.

## **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.

## **6 Confidential Updates**

It was noted that there were no confidential updates.








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**To:               Emergencies Board**

**On:               17 July 2020**

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**Report by:    Chief Executive**

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**Heading:      Update on COVID-19**

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## **1.     Introduction**

- 1.1    This report provides an update of the Council's current arrangements and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Information is provided in Section 3 on the current position including the numbers of cases and deaths and a summary of the current assessment of the pandemic by the Director General of the WHO.
- 1.2    Section 4 provides an update on the impact on Police and Fire and Rescue services locally. Section 5 updates the Board on work being done to in response to the Economic impact of the pandemic while Section 6 provides the current position with Council services ongoing recovery arrangements and the position of the Health and Social Care Partnership is included in Section 7.

### **Key Messages**

- 1.3    There is clear evidence of success in suppressing the impact of the virus since the peak of the pandemic. No COVID-19 death has been recorded in Renfrewshire in the week ending 12 July 2020. Scotland reported no new deaths from COVID-19 on 7 successive days during the week up to 15 July 2020. No new deaths from COVID-19 have been reported in Renfrewshire Care Homes since 10 June 2020 and no care homes have reported residents with symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed cases since 19 June 2020. No Care at Home service users have reportedly died with COVID-19 since 9 May 2020.
- 1.4    The position in world terms is less positive and it is clear that there is an ongoing risk presented by the pandemic and highlighted by the Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) that could impact on communities in Scotland if current measures to track and reduce transmission are not maintained.
- 1.5    Police and Fire and Rescue Services are beginning to return to more normal patterns of working as the lockdown measures are eased and representatives of the service will be in attendance to provide an update for Elected Members.

- 1.6 Recent business survey results highlight that 92% of Renfrewshire businesses have been closed or operating at only partial capacity throughout lockdown. About half of all businesses had most of their workforce on furlough at one point – almost 27,000 employees across Renfrewshire, or just under 1 in 3 of the total workforce. 40% of businesses believe that redundancies may be likely over the next 3 months. Members of the Board are being asked to consider and approve a number of Business Support Measures, specifically directed to assisting businesses cope with the unique pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - 1.7 On 23 June 2020, the Scottish Government announced that schools will reopen for all children and young people full time from 11 August 2020, conditional on on-going scientific and health advice. A final decision will be made by 30 July 2020 with the blended model of learning and teaching remaining as a contingency plan should this be required.
  - 1.8 The Council's recovery plan was submitted to Education Scotland for scrutiny as previously noted. A copy of their response is attached to this report as Appendix 2. This highlights a number of key strengths and provides assurance that the approach being taken will effectively support the return to face to face learning and teaching for children and young people.
  - 1.9 Childcare hubs for the families of key workers and vulnerable children are being held over the summer period with approximately 200 children attending daily. In addition to the childcare hubs, an imaginative programme of traditional street play activities is being delivered using Street Stuff sessional workers and resources, maintaining the profile and awareness of this programme in communities until such time as normal Street Stuff programmes can resume.
  - 1.10 Ongoing restrictions on the holding of mass gatherings and events means that the winter programme of Council Events must be cancelled. Work is ongoing to support the delivery of a revised events programme for future years that will take into consideration any ongoing requirements related to COVID-19. Key activities such as the switch on of festive lights will be undertaken without associated events and Remembrance Day will be marked appropriately.
  - 1.11 Plans are being made for the restarting of relevant RLL services in line with the timetable set out by the Scottish Government.
  - 1.12 A phased programme and associated guidance for the reintroduction of care home visits has been developed nationally and is being rolled out. While a new social care inquiry is to be progressed between now and the end of 2020 to examine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social care sector.
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## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that the Emergencies Board:

- (a) Note the current national and local situation with regard to COVID-19 and the impact on communities, businesses, the Council and its partners
  - (b) Note the response and recovery measures being put in place by the Council and partners as set out in this report
  - (c) Agree the programme of business support measures detailed in paragraphs 5.32 to 5.44 of this report and their allocated budgets
  - (d) In line with the details outlined in paragraph 5.29 of the report, delegate to the Head of Regeneration, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources, authority to appropriately adjust resources between each of the individual Business Support Measures according to demand as required, with subsequent update reports to Members.
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### **3. Current Position**

- 3.1 Across the UK and in Scotland during the past week there have been continued positive indications of the ongoing successful suppression of the virus due to the actions taken during the lockdown period. For 7 successive days up to 15 July 2020 no COVID-19 deaths have been recorded in Scotland. Worldwide however, it is clear that the virus still poses a significant threat and the numbers of cases and deaths continue to increase significantly in some countries. The Director General of the WHO has recently provided his assessment of the current position in relation to the pandemic as outlined at paragraphs 3.6 to 3.14 of this report. Appendix 1 contains a number of graphs that provide context and illustrate the evolving pandemic and highlight the key points below:

#### **Local**

- No COVID-19 death was recorded in Renfrewshire in the week to 12 July 2020.
- No deaths from COVID-19 have been reported in Renfrewshire Care Homes since 10 June 2020 and no care homes have reported residents with symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed cases since 19 June 2020. No Care at Home service users have reportedly died with COVID-19 since 9 May 2020.
- During the last week, up to 15 July 2020 there were 7 days in succession when no COVID-19 deaths were reported in Scotland.
- Since 1 June 2020 overall numbers of deaths in Renfrewshire have been in line with the 5-year average. This is a significant reduction from the peak recorded during the week to 27 April 2020 when almost 60 deaths above average levels were recorded in Renfrewshire.
- Deaths in Care Homes in Renfrewshire were below the 5-year average up to 30 March 2020, but then peaked during the pandemic remaining above average levels till week commencing 25 May 2020.

#### **National**

- New cases identified in the UK peaked around 7 May 2020 at around 6,000 cases per day and since then numbers identified have declined steadily till June. Currently just under 600 new cases per day are being identified in the UK. (7 day moving average)
- New cases identified in Scotland peaked twice, in late April and in early May at just over 270 new cases per day. Since then cases identified have declined steadily and currently around 9 new cases are being identified per day across Scotland. (7 day moving average)
- National Records of Scotland figures show that the total number of deaths registered in Scotland in the week to 12 July 2020 was 969. The average number of deaths registered in the corresponding week over the previous five years was 1,025 meaning there were 5% fewer deaths (56) registered in the week to 12 July 2020 compared to the average. This is the third week in a row the total number of deaths has been lower than the average

#### **International**

- Worldwide the pandemic is still growing. Over 13.5 million cases have been recorded, affecting 213 countries, with increases in the USA, Brazil, India and South Africa accounting for around two thirds of the cases currently being referred to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

- While the UK has successfully managed to reduce the number of new cases identified per million population and is approaching levels previously reached by France and Italy, other countries are continuing to see increases – particularly in the USA where numbers of new cases per million population were broadly similar to the UK up to mid-May but have since significantly increased.

### **Numbers of Cases**

- 3.2 Currently there have been 291,313 hospital confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the UK. In Scotland there have been 18,373 confirmed hospital cases, 329 are currently in hospital of which 6 are in intensive care. Of these, 4,890 cases have been within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area and 187 people currently remain in hospital (around 55% of the current Scottish COVID-19 hospital cases) Fewer than 5 are in intensive care.

### **Numbers of Deaths**

- 3.3 Worldwide there have now been over 582,000 deaths due to COVID-19. At a UK level, there have now been 44,968 deaths. The UK ranks third for overall numbers of recorded deaths, behind both Brazil and the United States.
- 3.4 The National Records of Scotland report (15 July 2020) shows that at 12 July 2020, there had been a total of 4,187 deaths registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate – up 13 from 5 July 2020, the lowest weekly increase since the first week of the outbreak in March.
- 3.5 In Renfrewshire, a total of 206 people have died with COVID-19 since the outbreak of the virus. 99 have died in care homes, 98 in hospital and 9 at home or other non-institutional locations. No COVID-19 death was recorded in Renfrewshire in the week to 12 July 2020.

### **Director-General of WHO media briefing on COVID-19 - 13 July 2020**

- 3.6 At a Media Briefing on COVID-19 on 13 July 2020 the Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) set out his views on the current position in relation to the ongoing pandemic. He highlighted that on 12 July 2020, 230,000 cases of COVID-19 were reported to the WHO. Almost 80% of those cases were reported from just 10 countries, and 50% come from just two countries – the USA and Brazil.
- 3.7 The Director General noted that although the numbers of daily deaths remain relatively stable, there is a lot to be concerned about with four broad situations playing out across the world.
- 3.8 The first situation is countries that were alert and aware – they prepared and responded rapidly and effectively to the first cases identified. As a result, they have so far avoided large outbreaks. This was achieved as they pursued a comprehensive strategy to find, isolate, test and care for cases, and to trace and quarantine contacts. They were able to suppress the virus. New Zealand is one prominent example of this situation.
- 3.9 The second situation is countries in which there was a major outbreak that was brought under control through a combination of strong government control and populations adhering to key public health measures. Many countries in Europe

and elsewhere have demonstrated that it is possible to bring even large outbreaks under control. The UK and Scotland would currently be included in this scenario.

- 3.10 In both of these first two situations, where countries have effectively suppressed the virus, governments are seeking to open-up their societies on a data-driven, step-by-step basis, with a comprehensive public health approach, backed by a strong health workforce and community buy-in.
- 3.11 The third situation is the potential risk for the UK and Scotland. Countries that overcame the first peak of the outbreak, but having eased restrictions, are now struggling with new peaks and accelerating cases. In several countries across the world, dangerous increases in cases are occurring, and hospital wards filling up again. These countries are losing gains made as proven measures to reduce risk are either not implemented or are not being followed rigorously. In some cities and regions where transmission is intense, severe restrictions have been reinstated to bring the outbreak back under control – examples of this are currently happening in Australia and California. This is an ongoing potential risk within Scotland and the UK - particularly as the winter season approaches when the NHS is traditionally under pressure from seasonal flu outbreaks and other seasonal illnesses.
- 3.12 The fourth situation is those countries that are in the intense transmission phase of their outbreak. This is the case across parts of the Americas, South Asia, and several countries in Africa. The epicentre of the virus remains in the Americas, where more than 50% of the world's cases have been recorded. The southern States of the USA and countries in central America including Brazil are examples of this situation.
- 3.13 The Director General pointed out that it is clear from the first two situations that it's never too late to bring the virus under control, even if there's been explosive transmission. But there are no shortcuts to dealing with this pandemic.
- 3.14 While the Director General was clear that there can be no return to the "old normal" for the foreseeable future, he did set out a roadmap to a situation where the disease can be controlled, and populations are able to get on with their lives. His approach was a call to action for all public leaders: requiring a focus on reducing mortality and suppressing transmission through adherence to basic public health principles of physical distancing, avoiding crowded places, hand washing, wearing face coverings, coughing etiquette and staying at home when sick. These actions need to be reinforced by consistent and clear communication and reinforcement of these approaches, as a responsibility of all community leaders and governments.

- 4 Updates from Police Scotland and Scottish Fire & Rescue Service Service Update – Police Scotland**
- 4.1 Compliance with social distancing and the coronavirus legislation across Renfrewshire is now firmly embedded with the majority of individuals understanding and contributing positively to the wider aim. While a very small minority of the community are not recognising the importance of these measures, overall the number of warnings issued and associated enforcement activity required has fallen. Accompanied by the easing of lockdown in line with the Scottish Government strategy, it would appear the community has broadly become accustomed to the regulations.
- 4.2 The movement into Phase 3 and the compulsory use of face masks has resulted in minimal complaints to the police. In this regard, Police Scotland continue to focus on the four 'E's of Engage, Explain, Encourage, before Enforcing as a last resort. A robust action plan in partnership with Renfrewshire Council Licensing, Community Protection and Regulatory services was put in place for the re-opening of licensed premises outside areas and beer gardens. This involved pre-emptive visits to provide advice and assistance in set up and then high visibility patrols to monitor. Again, there was widespread compliance and good practice observed.
- 4.3 Complaints from members of the public and elected members in relation to issues of non-compliance continue to inform and contribute to operational responses. Proactive patrols are being carried out in partnership with the Council Community Safety Wardens.
- 4.4 In early February, prior to the pandemic and as previously updated to members, the newly established Contact Assessment Model (CAM) was introduced and provided the standard response protocol for Local Policing Appointments. As part of the response to the pandemic, Local Policing Appointments were suspended due to risk of COVID-19 transmission, however these have since been re-instated, starting on 14 July 2020. This is allowing Police Officers to arrange both telephone and face-to-face appointments, taking all requisite and necessary safety precautions. This is an important step to allow Police Scotland to manage demand and protect the most vulnerable in the community.
- 4.5 The support to local frontline policing received from redeployed central and specialised resources during the pandemic response is now also in the process of being scaled back as specialised officers return to their core roles - however the option to revert to this enhanced model remains a viable option should it be required moving forward. Notwithstanding, the division continues to receive regular assistance from national resources, such as the mounted section and force reserve, in order to provide highly visible patrols in public spaces and town centres.
- 4.6 K-Division continues to undertake a number of embedded processes to keep staff and the public they are in contact with safe, such as strict decontamination and cleaning regimes. Officers continue to be provided with specialist PPE equipment to ensure a suitable and measured response. Testing is widely and promptly available for police officers in Renfrewshire and absence levels have continued to fall since the start of the outbreak. The Division is currently operating at pre-COVID staffing levels.

#### **Service Update - Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)**

- 4.7 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) are continuing to deliver all statutory obligations throughout Renfrewshire whilst following both organisational and Government guidance in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Robust COVID-19 contingency planning continues to be undertaken and the availability of operational assets and resources within Renfrewshire has so far remained well within expected confidence levels. From a governance perspective, the SFRS COVID-19 Recovery Group has now been established and is working towards a phased recovery process in line with Government Guidance.
- 4.8 Essential functions continue for all front-line staff within Renfrewshire. SFRS staff have been provided with extensive contingency guidance including a suite of operational response documents. In line with the phased recovery process, some non-critical training courses that were cancelled or postponed are now being delivered virtually and where possible being undertaken under strict COVID-19 guidelines. The service continues to fulfil all statutory responsibilities, in supporting local communities, local Resilience Partnerships and other stakeholders during the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.9 Operationally, SFRS experienced a slight increase in the number of primary and secondary fires attended by local operational crews over the month of May. However, during the month of June, a significant decrease in these figures was observed. SFRS continues to work with Renfrewshire Council, Police Scotland and other partners through the Daily Tasking process to provide targeted interventions and reduction strategies. Moreover, the service remains fully committed to using national SFRS seasonal campaigns and its wider Prevention and Protection strategy to assist in the reduction of deliberate fire setting in the Renfrewshire area.
- 4.10 Work is now well underway to assess all workplaces across SFRS in line with the latest UK Government and Health and Safety Executive guidance, to identify what changes need to be made to make SFRS buildings COVID-19 secure.
- 4.11 Face coverings have been provided to all SFRS staff to allow them to carry out their duties where social distancing cannot be maintained. The service is working to facilitate a safe return to work for all staff as quickly as possible. This will be done in line with Government Guidance and the SFRS COVID-19 Recovery Group.



## 5 Economic Update

- Recent Business Survey results reveal that:
    - 92% of Renfrewshire business have been closed or operating at only partial capacity and 44% have been completely closed throughout lockdown
    - About half of all businesses had most of their workforce on furlough at one point, almost 27,000 employees across Renfrewshire, just under 1 in 3 of their total workforce
    - 40% of businesses believe that redundancies may be likely over next 3 months
  - Members of the Board are asked to approve a number of Business Support Measures, specifically directed to assisting businesses cope with the unique pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Latest employment figures will be released on 16 July 2020 and a verbal update will be available at the Emergencies Board meeting on 17 July 2020
  - The Scottish Government is due to respond to the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) by the end of July and an update will be provided at the next meeting of the Emergencies Board following their response
- 5.1 The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in significant challenges for economies across the world. The UK and Scottish Governments have already taken decisions to invest £billions to support businesses during the lockdown period and (through the furlough scheme) to retain staff in employment as far as possible, pending decisions on restarting the economy.
- 5.2 Renfrewshire's economy has well established strengths in transport (including Glasgow Airport), retail (including Braehead), manufacturing (including significant international exports) and construction. All these sectors and their wider supply chains have been impacted by the lockdown restrictions which have reduced supply and led to subdued demand for products and services.
- 5.3 However, even before the COVID-19 crisis, the Scottish economy was facing several strategic challenges including climate change, Brexit and lower than average productivity. Likewise, Renfrewshire's economy (as illustrated in the Economic Strategy Sept 2019) was facing challenges such as: growing the working age population; more closely aligning the education and skills provision with the needs of local employers; and achieving a strong and inclusive economy.
- 5.4 At July 2020 the number of staff furloughed by Renfrewshire based businesses was almost 27,000, just under 1 in 3 of all employees in the area.
- 5.5 During the period March – July 2020 Renfrewshire Council distributed over £26million to around 2,500 local businesses and self-employed residents. These support measures which have been aimed primarily at ratepayers of smaller business premises together with some larger businesses in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors have been well received and popular, judging by the feedback to the recent Business Survey. The Scottish Government announced the closure of these grant streams from 10 July 2020.

- 5.6 Experience from previous recessions demonstrates that some groups of people: those in lower paid jobs; younger people; the self-employed and those on temporary contracts – tend to be more affected than others. This impact can accentuate economic and social disparities that already exist within economies such as Renfrewshire. When fewer jobs are available generally, this results in those groups listed above being furthest from accessing them.

#### **UK Government's "Plan for Jobs"**

- 5.7 On 7 July 2020 the UK Government made an announcement on further economic stimuli to try to boost spending and encourage businesses to retain their workforce as lockdown measures are eased. It is expected that a full Budget Statement will follow in Autumn 2020. The following summary applies only to those parts of the announcement that are UK-wide. Other announcements were made by the UK government about apprenticeships, stamp duty, grants for energy efficient homes and several other funds but these only apply in England.
- 5.8 **Job Retention Bonus** (up to £9,000m) - The UK government will introduce a one-off payment of £1,000 to UK employers for every furloughed employee who returns to work and remains continuously employed through to the end of January 2021. Employees must earn above £520 per month on average between October and January 31, 2021 for the business to qualify. Further details will follow for employers. In terms of Renfrewshire businesses almost 27,000 employees were furloughed as at July 2020.
- 5.9 **Flexible Support Fund** - A proposal to increase funding by £150 million to increase the capacity of the Rapid Response Service (equivalent in Scotland is delivered through the PACE (Positive Action for Continuing Employment) Partnership by Skills Development Scotland). Among other things this service for impending redundancies can support claimants by providing links to benefits, training opportunities and other employability services and help with CV writing and travel expenses for attending interviews.
- 5.10 **Kickstart Scheme** (£2,000m) – the UK government hope to create hundreds of thousands of 6-month work placements aimed at those aged 16-24 who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. Funding available for each job will cover 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus the associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. This could equate to £6,500 in funding for each person aged 18 taking up one of these placements. Businesses would have to demonstrate that these were additional jobs.
- 5.11 **Hospitality Sector** - A short term (July 2020 to January 2021) reduction in VAT to 5% across the UK on accommodation; admission to attractions; and supplies of non-alcoholic food and drink in restaurants, pubs and cafes. A scheme has also been introduced to offer a 50% discount on food and non-alcoholic drinks (up to £10 per head) ordered at participating restaurants, cafes and pubs during August 2020. This offer will only apply Monday to Wednesday each week. There is no cap on the number of times any individual or household can access this scheme.

- 5.12 **Supporting people in finding jobs** – a range of interventions including doubling the number of work coaches at DWP (£825M) and additional intensive support to those who have been unemployed for at least three months.
- 5.13 **Culture / Arts** (£1.57 billion) - A fund to support arts and cultural organisations including museums, galleries, theatres, and heritage sites. From this it has been confirmed that Scotland will receive £97m.
- 5.14 **Universities** - a £300 million investment in 2020-21 to boost equipment and infrastructure for universities and institutes across the UK.
- 5.15 **Land & Building Transaction Tax** (Scotland only equivalent to Stamp Duty) - subsequent to the Chancellor's statement, the Scottish Government announced a temporary exemption from the tax for first-time home buyers of properties valued at under £250,000. For properties of a higher value, the tax rate will be reduced. The change will come into force as soon as possible and will not apply to second homes.
- Scottish Government – advisory group reports**
- 5.16 The Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) presented their report findings and recommendations: 'Towards a robust, resilient wellbeing economy for Scotland' to the Scottish Government at the end of June. The Scottish Government has indicated it will respond to the AGER report at the end of July and it is anticipated that the Council will wish to consider its proposed economic recovery plan in light of this response.
- 5.17 The AGER report highlights that recommendations have been included where the Group believe they "will make the most immediate impact on the course of Scotland's recovery: supporting jobs; protecting and progressing education and skills; and thereby helping to tackle inequality". The AGER recommendations include a range of measures including fiscal; enterprise; and labour market interventions as well as considering new models for economic development focused on place-based and regional solutions.
- 5.18 The Council has already been at the forefront of tackling the COVID-19 health and resultant economic crisis – by supporting households and children ensuring that they have access to food, medicines, education and delivering immediate financial support to businesses and individuals. There are several areas where the Council could have a leading or supporting role in the delivery of AGER recommendations. These areas include capital investment such as investment in housing; supporting Scotland's prospectus for international investment by identifying and developing opportunities such as AMIDS and supporting local businesses seeking to export to new markets; taking forward measures to counter any education learning loss; and developing skills interventions to address the risks of unemployment, in particular for those under 25 and making provision for people to re-skill and upskill. The Council is also best placed to build alliances and broker collaboration with stakeholders across Renfrewshire and with the Government and its agencies.
- 5.19 In addition to the AGER, a sub-group of the Enterprise and Skills Strategic Board was established in June 2020 to identify actions to help mitigate the rise in unemployment arising from the health and economic crisis. Unemployment is

predicted to rise significantly across Scotland and, for vulnerable groups, could be 3 times higher than the Scottish average. The report makes clear that the status-quo is not an option and skills and business support need to change to meet the scale of the anticipated economic challenge. The actions identified by the sub-group are focused on both labour demand and supply and are across several areas including supporting employee retention, assistance for those facing redundancy, training for the unemployed and helping vulnerable people into employment. Employability and skills features strongly in both advisory groups' recommendations to the Scottish Government. In discussions at national level with SOLACE and SLAED and others, it has been trailed that a national employability response is likely to be forthcoming as part of the Government's post-COVID-19 recovery response.

- 5.20 The proposed actions cut across several Council services and current proposals, principally in Economic Development and Children's Services, for example Foundation Apprenticeships; promotion and marketing of key sectors in schools; enterprise and entrepreneurship in schools; community benefit clauses; enhanced employability and business services.

### **Employability – National Proposals**

- 5.21 The Council's Employability Service has been offering support on jobs and skills development throughout the pandemic. Over the next month or so the national support for employability will become clearer and the service will look to reprofile services to ensure that the best possible services are provided to those who need them most.
- 5.22 Current employability services are supported through ESF. The Scottish Government are looking to augment the eligibility criteria for the remaining ESF programme to ensure that it is as responsive as possible to the needs of the current situation. The Council will be able to make amendments to the ESF programme as a result.
- 5.23 Both the Scottish Government and local authorities remain fully committed to "No One Left Behind" - an employability system that puts people at the centre; is easy to navigate; integrates and aligns with other services; and tackles long standing issues of poverty and inactivity in the labour market. "No One Left Behind" remains valid amidst the labour market challenges brought about by the pandemic and is fundamental to prevent a widening of inequality.
- 5.24 Alongside the Chancellors announcement on UK wide support for employment, the Scottish Government pledged an additional £100M "for targeted employment support and training" in recognition that more was required to support employment and skills. As part of this there is expected to be a youth guarantee to augment the proposed UK wide "Kickstart Scheme" and to recognise that young people are expected to be disproportionately affected by the crisis
- 5.25 Renfrewshire Council is an active member of the local PACE (Positive Action for Continuing Employment) Partnership – providing interagency support for those facing redundancy. It is worth noting that the Enterprise & Skills Advisory Group have recommended that PACE should be scaled up to be able to offer a

sectoral/regional specialist approach using the insight and intelligence provided by local authorities.

### Latest Unemployment Figures

- 5.26 Unemployment figures for Renfrewshire for the period March – May 2020 are shown in the Table below. Overall total unemployment claimants increased by 88% over the 2 months to May 2020. A similar level of increase has been witnessed across all age groups. The government are due to publish the latest unemployment data on 16 July 2020. The Board will be updated verbally on this at the meeting.

	Claimant numbers	Of which male	Of which female	Aged 18-24	Aged 25-49	Aged 50+
March 2020	4,015	2,655	1,360	745	2,250	1,000
April 2020	6,675	4,390	2,290	1,130	3,845	1,670
May 2020	7,565	4,940	2,625	1,365	4,305	1,860
<i>Increase March -May 2020</i>	+88%	+86%	+93%	+83%	+91%	+86%

Table 1: Unemployment registrations in Renfrewshire (on dates shown)

### Renfrewshire Business Survey – Spring 2020

- 5.27 The Council and Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce joined forces to seek the views of over 500 local businesses. Most were contacted during June 2020 by phone and email. This represents about 10% of all Renfrewshire companies. The aim was to try to better understand the impact of the lockdown restrictions and what the Council / Chamber may be able to do to overcome the challenges that lie ahead. Businesses from every corner of Renfrewshire and across all sectors were represented. This is illustrated in Appendix 1.
- 5.28 Some of the key learning points from the survey are set out below. A full summary of the Business Survey results is available on request.
- 92% of Renfrewshire business have been closed or operating at only partial capacity during the lockdown;
  - 44% have been completely closed throughout lockdown;
  - The most significant effects of lockdown included reduced cashflow, lower sales income and lost / cancelled orders;
  - 82% of those surveyed have accessed Government financial support;
  - Almost three quarters of all business made use of the furlough scheme;
  - About half of all businesses had most of their workforce on furlough at one point;
  - 40% believe that redundancies may be likely over next 3 months;
  - Reasons for potential redundancies included uncertainty on whether customers / orders / supply chain would return and at what level;
  - Over half of the businesses surveyed have cancelled/postponed investment;
  - Businesses state they are looking for support with:
    - Altering premises to conform with social distancing;
    - Regular updates on latest regulations
    - Advice on how to access additional funding;
    - Training webinars on specific issues;
    - Employability advice for employees;

### **Proposed Business Support Measures**

- 5.29 Following the closure of business grants nationally and taking into consideration the views expressed by businesses in the Business Survey, a series of business support measures have been developed for the consideration of elected members. These measures are based on feedback from businesses as well as the local knowledge of the Council and Chamber in terms of the local economy and what it is believed will make the biggest difference in the short term. These support mechanisms, specifically targeted at Renfrewshire businesses would supplement further national interventions that are expected to be announced by the Scottish Government in due course, in their response to the advisory groups' recommendations. It is recognised that the pattern of demand across the proposed business support measures outlined in this report may subsequently vary (including as a result of funding streams that may be subsequently announced at a national level). In order to respond flexibly and quickly to such developments, officers are seeking delegated authority to appropriately adjust resources across each of the individual measures in response to changes in demand. Details of any such adjustments that are actioned will be provided in subsequent update reports to Board. There would be no change to the overall level of funding proposed in this report without subsequent Board approval.
- 5.30 In addition to reconfiguring the economic development programme to offer webinars; advice on latest regulations; and guidance on social distancing and adapting workplaces; a series of interventions is being proposed that it is believed will prove attractive to businesses and to the self-employed. These proposals will use existing funding already identified for economic development purposes in Renfrewshire, targeting it in a slightly different way to best meet the needs of local businesses in the context of the pandemic.
- 5.31 Members of the Board are recommended to approve the proposed Business Support Measures detailed below in paragraphs 5.32 to 5.44. The source of the proposed funding is itemised under each measure. The specific criteria to be applied to applications for funding or support will be made clear when the Support Measures are publicised, and applications go live. Officers are aiming to be in a position to accept applications for each of the Support Measures by mid-August 2020. The proposed grants will operate under the established conditions already in place for existing Council economic development programmes (all previously approved by Board). For all the maximum levels of loan and grant proposed there is existing delegated authority for officers to assess and approve awards at this amount.

### **Business Restart Loans**

- 5.32 One of the key issues identified by the Renfrewshire Business Survey was access to cashflow in the short term for businesses to get back on to a more even keel after the lockdown as their business re-opens. To address this issue, it is proposed to offer short term interest free loans of up to £5,000 to local businesses.
- 5.33 These would be administered in line with the existing business loan scheme run by the Council, and approved by Board, with payments being made through Renfrewshire Wide Credit Union.
- 5.34 To augment the existing offer, it is proposed to repurpose the excess monies from the West of Scotland Loan Fund (WoSLF) (circa £500,000) which the Leadership

Board agreed in June 2019 should be used for wider economic development purposes in Renfrewshire. In accordance with the original objectives of the WoSLF this funding must be used in keeping with the spirit against which the funds have been accrued (the objectives of the WoSLF) – ie. ‘likeminded economic development activity’. It is recommended that given the current context this funding would be best used to offer a short-term loan facility to local businesses to assist with their cashflow during the recovery phase. These loans would be offered by application. All loans would be at zero% interest for between 1 and 3 years (to suit the needs of the business).

### **Business Grants for Social Distancing Adaptations**

- 5.35 Another commonly highlighted concern from businesses was their ability to adapt to physical distancing requirements and the affordability of this.
- 5.36 To this end it is proposed that grants of up to £2,500 be offered to businesses to assist them in meeting physical distancing guidelines. Businesses would be expected, as a minimum, to match any grant payment with their own contribution, thus allowing them to part fund the total costs. It is acknowledged that some businesses will already have made adaptations ahead of re-opening and therefore it is proposed that retrospective applications (with the appropriate evidence) should be permitted to allow these businesses to also benefit from the grant provision.
- 5.37 An anticipated budget of £250,000 can be made available for this purpose by repurposing the existing Retail Improvement Grants for one year (£150,000) on the basis that many businesses will be more concerned with restarting operations than investing further in their premises at this time. This would correlate with the Business Survey which showed that over half of those surveyed had cancelled planned investments as a result of the pandemic. A further £80,000 would be used from the WoSLF which would remain within the spirit of the objectives of that Fund and the overall budget would be supplemented (if successful) with £20,000 that the Council have applied for to the Scottish Towns Partnership Resilience & Recovery Fund (decision due late July 2020).

### **Business Grants (Restart and Sustain Business)**

- 5.38 Businesses have been clear that the next few months will be challenging. Therefore, it is proposed that a grant programme be made available to help Renfrewshire businesses restart and sustain themselves through this period and make plans for future growth. Retaining jobs will be a crucial factor in any national recovery plan as will the creation of new jobs to replace employment that will be lost.
- 5.39 To make a clear distinction between this measure and the Business Restart Loans, the grants will not be made available to businesses whose primary ask is to supplement cashflow in the short term. They will be directed towards the loan facility. These grants (of up to £10,000) will principally be promoted to those businesses looking to secure the longer-term growth of the business and the potential to add jobs over time. As with the social distancing grants the business applying would be expected to match any contribution from Renfrewshire Council.

- 5.40 An anticipated budget of £400,000 can be made available by repurposing part of the existing Invest in Renfrewshire / core Economic Development budget (£380,000) for this financial year and supplementing this with the remainder of the excess monies from the WoSLF (exclusive of that identified above = £20,000).

**Advice and Support**

- 5.41 As well as offering financial support through the proposed programme of interim measures, bespoke advice and support to existing business and self-employed residents and those contemplating starting their own business would be of assistance.
- 5.42 Experience from previous economic downturns shows that as residents are faced with redundancy, they often explore self-employment options. Agreement is sought that £100,000 from existing Invest in Renfrewshire funds be repurposed to offer support to those looking to set up a business for the first time.
- 5.43 Some businesses are struggling, and many may not know where to turn. The current range of public funded services don't tend to market as a "crisis" service (much more as a growth and development service) although much of the support on offer would be useful to a struggling business. In discussions with the Chamber, FSB and other partners it is considered that there is scope to offer expert help to businesses that find themselves in crisis as a result of the current COVID-19 context. This could be as simple as talking through the options available to them or could involve named "expert" help from business mentors on matters (legal, business plan, etc) or bespoke training where this is required. It is proposed to augment the current "expert help" budget by an additional £50,000 from Council's core Economic Development funding.
- 5.44 Overall the above package of business support measures would amount to a total of £1.3m in potential funding for Renfrewshire businesses, specifically directed to assisting them cope with the unique pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. If approved, these interim business support measures would be widely publicised to the business community through the normal Council channels and via those of Chamber of Commerce, FSB, Paisley First and others in order to promote their take-up.



## 6 Recovery Update: Living with COVID-19

- On 23<sup>rd</sup> June, the Scottish Government announced that schools will reopen for all children and young people full time from 11th August, conditional on on-going scientific and health advice. A final decision will be made by 30 July 2020 with the blended model of learning and teaching remaining as a contingency plan should this be required.
- The Council's recovery planning was submitted to Education Scotland for scrutiny as previously noted. A copy of their response is attached to this report as Appendix 2. This highlights a number of key strengths and provides assurance that the approach being taken will effectively support the return to face to face learning and teaching for children and young people
- Childcare hubs for the families of key workers and vulnerable children are being held over the summer period with approximately 200 children attending daily. In addition to the childcare hubs, a programme of street play activities is offering an imaginative programme of traditional street play activities being delivered using Street Stuff sessional workers and resources, maintaining the profile and awareness of this programme in communities until such time as normal Street Stuff programmes can resume.
- Plans are being made for the reopening of non-essential offices in phase 4 in line with the current restrictions in relation to physical distancing for priority services needing office space.
- Arrangements are being made by the Registration Service for the re-introduction of indoor marriage and civil partnership ceremonies.
- Ongoing restrictions on the holding of mass gatherings and events mean that the winter programme of Council Events must be cancelled. Work is ongoing to support the delivery of a revised events programme for future years that will take into consideration any ongoing requirements related to COVID-19. Key activities such as the switch on of festive lights will be undertaken without associated events and Remembrance Day will be marked appropriately.
- Plans are being made for the restarting of relevant RLL services in line with the timetable set out by the Scottish Government.

### Children's Services

#### Schools Recovery Plan

- 6.1 On 23 June 2020, the Scottish Government announced that schools will reopen for all children and young people full time from 11 August 2020, conditional on on-going scientific and health advice. A final decision will be made by 30 July 2020 with the blended model of learning and teaching remaining as a contingency plan should this be required.
- 6.2 The Council's recovery planning was submitted to Education Scotland for scrutiny as previously noted. A copy of their response is attached to this report as Appendix 2. This highlights a number of key strengths and provides assurance that the approach being taken will effectively support the return to face to face learning and teaching for children and young people.
- 6.3 It is anticipated that further detailed guidance will be issued by government to support schools in their planning for the new session. This will ensure a safe return to full time learning through an increased focus on areas such as cleaning, hygiene routines, building ventilation and procedures for "test and protect". Should

this become available prior to the meeting of the Emergencies Board then a verbal update will be provided by the Director of Children's Services at the meeting of the Board.

- 6.4 Once this guidance has been published and the implications fully understood and considered, with planning progressed across all services, a full briefing will be provided for elected members.
- 6.5 Detailed plans will be available to support schools for both a full return and a blended learning model should this still be required.

### **Communities and Public Protection**

#### **Community Learning and Development**

- 6.6 Childcare hubs for the families of key workers and vulnerable children are being held over the summer period. These are at Johnstone West Campus, St James Renfrew, West Primary School, Glencoats Primary School and Riverbrae for children with specific needs. The childcare hubs are open Monday to Friday including public holidays and to date have been well attended with approximately 200 children attending daily.
- 6.7 In addition to the childcare hubs, a programme of street play activities will be delivered from 16 July 2020 for eligible families. This is offering a programme of activities for those children who previously would have been eligible to attend the Families First Clubs over the summer period. These activities are being delivered using Street Stuff sessional workers and resources, maintaining the profile and awareness of this programme in communities until such time as normal Street Stuff programmes can resume, which is anticipated to be around the time schools return for the autumn term, depending on anticipated government guidance.

#### **Support for businesses**

- 6.8 Officers from across many services have continued to assist businesses in opening up. In particular, as the indoor retail sector has continued to open both Environmental Health Officers and Trading Standards Officers have visited premises to ensure compliance with the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020. This included appropriate risk assessments and social distancing within the shop and also the queues outside.
- 6.9 There have continued to be no major problems, with most premises noted to have good procedures and plans in place. Officers will continue to visit shops proactively to assist and raise any issues witnessed.
- 6.10 As pubs and restaurants have also re-opened, officers from Communities and Public Protection have worked closely with colleagues in Police Scotland and Licensing to undertake proactive joint visits. Further guidance and changes to legislation will continue to influence decisions made by Officers.

#### **Renfrewshire Community Safety Hub**

- 6.11 The Renfrewshire Community Safety Hub is now successfully supporting most operational community protection services and providing additional capacity to assist communities and businesses. The Hub building presented challenges to ensuring physical distancing, however, risk assessments were undertaken and staff shift start and finish times adjusted to minimise interactions where possible.

Levels of service remain reduced while some staff continue to work from home, remain shielding or are seconded to other essential areas of priority activity, but capacity to respond to most types of incident has been restored and will be prioritised on the basis of identified need and priority. The reinstatement of services in this facility has allowed a more visible presence in and around towns and villages to support businesses as they reopen and provide re-assurance to communities around anti-social behaviour or fly tipping.

### **Communities Housing and Planning**

#### **Sheltered Housing**

- 6.12 In line with Scottish Government guidance and following consultation with tenants, measures are now in place which will allow communal lounge areas to re-open on 17 July 2020 in Renfrewshire Council's ten Sheltered Housing Facilities.
- 6.13 Practical measures such as anti-bacterial wipes have been provided and hand sanitiser dispensers will be installed in every lounge, with some chairs removed in order to allow the remaining chairs to be placed 2m apart. Letters have been issued to all tenants about the new arrangements stressing the need for residents to remember the importance of being considerate towards neighbours in order to keep everyone safe and healthy. Initially lounges can only be used by tenants, however this will be reviewed as the recovery from COVID-19 restrictions progresses.

#### **Re-opening of Non-Essential Office Accommodation**

- 6.14 Planning has been started for the for the reopening of non-essential offices in line with anticipated ongoing restrictions in relation to physical distancing and the potential expectation of continued working from home where appropriate for the foreseeable future.
- 6.15 Under the governments routemap, non-essential offices are currently not allowed to open and working from home and working flexibly remains the default. The Council has only opened very limited office accommodation during the lockdown to support the delivery of essential services and the restarting of services under phases 1, 2 and 3 of the Scottish Governments routemap. Work has now been undertaken to prepare for the reopening of other non-essential offices when the governments routemap allows.
- 6.16 Planning has been undertaken based on a requirement for 2 metres physical distancing, which has significantly reduced the maximum capacity of office accommodation to around a quarter of previous occupancy levels. In making plans to reopen non-essential offices, priority is being given to services that require access to specific equipment or facilities; to services where there is a demand from customers that need direct contact or support; and to support employees that for welfare or personal reasons find working from an office to be desirable. Under these plans the default position for most formerly office-based employees will be to remain working flexibly from home wherever possible.
- 6.17 As offices begin to reopen for staff and members, prioritised front facing customer services will reopen for face to face enquiries as well, most likely on a phased basis. In preparing for this, screens will be erected, with access and egress circulation pathways created in buildings to support physical distancing and the safety of staff and the public. Face to face enquires will be by appointment

wherever possible to support physical distancing arrangements and manage demand and space requirements.

- 6.18 The reopening of offices and services will be supported by the Communications Service with an employee and member guide to ensure the safety of employees, members and customers at all times. Additional information will be provided in the next report to the Emergencies Board, subject to further announcements by the First Minister

## **Finance and Resources**

### **Registration Services**

- 6.19 Following the First Minister's announcement on 9 July 2020 as part of the relaxation of restrictions in phase 3 of the Routemap, arrangements are being made by the Registration Service for the re-introduction of indoor marriage and civil partnership ceremonies.

### **Communications and Marketing Events Programme – Winter 2020**

- 6.20 At the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak, a ban on mass gatherings was announced by UK and Scottish Governments, which resulted in the cancellation of large scale and major events across the UK. In response, the Council's events programme for Spring was cancelled and this was further extended to include the summer and autumn programme up to and including the Halloween Festival. At present the ban on mass gatherings remains in place. Given this, and the planning time required for large scale events, the Council's winter programme; including Paisley Fireworks and Christmas Light events in Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone will not go ahead.
- 6.21 This position is based on current public health advice, the scale of the programme and the planning time required to safely accommodate large numbers of people who attend the winter events programme; the smallest attracting upwards from 2,000 people, with Fireworks and Paisley Lights attracting upwards of 25,000 people. At present, it is not known when or if mass gatherings will be permitted during 2020, or what restrictions and measures will be required when the ban is lifted. The risk of localised COVID-19 outbreaks requiring lockdown measures and the scientific view that winter may see a second spike in the virus presents an additional public health risk and could additionally place the Council at a significant financial risk, should event planning proceed and require cancellation.
- 6.22 Recognising, the festive period is an important time for town centre trading, the Council will continue to work with each of the main organisations; Paisley First, Johnstone Business Consortium and Renfrew Development Trust to help to attract footfall in a COVID-safe way. This will be supported further through the Council's Spend Local marketing campaign. Christmas lights in each town will be switched on, however there will be no advertised dates to ensure mass gatherings are not encouraged. The Council events team will work with national agencies and the British Legion to ensure Remembrance Day is still marked appropriately.
- 6.23 Officers from the Events team are currently seconded to support the response to COVID-19 in various services across the Council but continue to work closely with EventScotland, the new Events Industry Advisory Group - created in response to COVID-19, as well as the local authority events organisers group. On return to the

events team, planning will begin on a new events programme for 2021 that is COVID-19 safe; will deliver a positive economic impact; support local businesses and increase participation. The development of the programme will be guided by the research currently being led by EventScotland on consumer confidence.

- 6.24 As further guidance is published by the Scottish Government, Events Scotland and the Purple Guide, the Council team will monitor and share with local groups and organisations involved in the planning of events to ensure all partners work collaboratively with access to the latest information and advice. The existing events toolkit is being updated to support planning within a COVID-19 context and the additional risks and measures that local event organisers must consider within their future planning processes.

### **Environment and Infrastructure Services**

#### **Spaces for People Funding**

- 6.25 As reported at the last Emergencies Board meeting, the Council has been awarded funding to progress the creation of temporary cycle lanes on arterial commuter routes across Renfrewshire. The list of nine arterial routes that the Council has been provided with funding for are set out below. As previously reported, there will be a short consultation period on each of the proposals for the 9 temporary cycle lanes. The consultation will be launched on 20 July 2020 and close on 27 July 2020. All Elected Members will be informed of the detailed proposals and the consultation will be promoted through the Council's social media channels and website. The service will also advise businesses, Community Councils and local partnerships of the consultation.

1. Howwood to Paisley corridor (including Elderslie Gap)
2. Glasgow Road (west) Paisley
3. Barrhead Road, Paisley
4. Causeyside Street, Paisley
5. Central Paisley and west including Ferguslie, St Mirren and Kilbarchan Rd
6. Inchinnan Road, Paisley
7. Greenock Rd, Inchinnan
8. Inchinnan Road, Renfrew
9. Paisley to Renfrew

- 6.26 In addition to the above proposals Sustrans have provided funding for detailed design work to be carried out on a proposed cycling connection between Houston and Bridge of Weir as the infrastructure works required are more significant than for other projects due to the current road limitations in terms of width and drainage.

### **Renfrewshire Leisure Service**

#### **Libraries**

- 6.27 Following the latest update of the Scottish Government's route map out of lockdown, some services inside library buildings will begin from 20 July 2020.
- 6.28 All 12 of the libraries operated by RLL will be open for returns and for book borrowing on a click and collect basis, as part of measures being put in place to ensure the safety of staff and library users. Books can be reserved online at [www.renfrewshirelibraries.co.uk](http://www.renfrewshirelibraries.co.uk) or by telephone on 0300 300 1188. Access to buildings will be on a one in, one out basis. Each building will have a simple drop-off point for returns.

- 6.29 In addition, Library staff will continue with the Libraries Direct service they have been operating throughout lockdown. This has seen them work with volunteers and Renfrewshire Council to deliver books and make wellbeing phone calls to people who have been shielding in their homes throughout the pandemic
- 6.30 Employees will also carry on developing the innovative work carried out online during lockdown. This has included storytimes and Bookbug sessions, code clubs, live streaming quizzes and activities, book reviews, shared reading groups and writing workshops, and a children's Summer Reading Challenge.
- 6.31 Since March 2020, online registration for library membership has increased by more than 300% and there has been a significant increase in use of the online ebook and emagazine loans, which are up by 82%.

### **Indoor Leisure**

- 6.32 At the current time RLL remain unable to open indoor facilities, however the service is working hard to adapt and prepare facilities for when the Scottish Government confirms that gyms and pools can reopen. Current Scottish Government guidance suggests this will not be before 31 July 2020.
- 6.33 To support the smooth return of pupils for the Autumn term in August 2020 the two Renfrewshire Leisure facilities housed within the school estate at Park Mains and Johnstone Hub will remain closed until after the beginning of the school term. This position will be reviewed with colleagues in Children's Services two weeks after schools return.
- 6.34 Erskine Sports Centre has been identified as a possible location for a childcare hub, in the event that the Scottish Government advises the contingency blended model of schooling is required. Confirmation of this is expected from the Scottish Government by 30 July 2020. Currently RLL employees are working closely with Council colleagues to prepare for either eventuality and will ensure the Sports Centre is ready for reopening if it is not required by the Council as a childcare hub.

### **Outdoor Contact Sport**

- 6.35 The Scottish Government has confirmed that outdoor contact sports for children and young people can return from 13 July 2020, and RLL are actively engaging with Renfrewshire Council, individual clubs and relevant sporting bodies to ensure that availability is provided as soon as possible, within safety guidelines and individual facility operational requirements and taking into consideration constraints on the use of facilities such as 3G pitches located within the schools estate while the preparations are being made for the smooth return of pupils to schools in August.

### **Communities facilities**

- 6.36 The Scottish Government has confirmed that community facilities are not yet approved to open, and RLL is in active dialogue with users of facilities to ensure that they are well prepared for the point at which that position changes. While public use of community facilities is not yet possible, RLL will actively work with community planning partners where their proposed use of community facilities qualifies for exemption under Scottish Government guidelines.

## 7 Health and Social Care Partnership

- There have been no additional deaths reported since 10 June 2020, and no care homes have reported residents with symptoms of COVID-19 or confirmed cases since 19 June 2020. No Care at Home service users have reportedly died with COVID-19 since 9 May 2020.
- A phased programme and associated guidance for the reintroduction of care home visits has been developed nationally and is being rolled out.
- A new social care inquiry is to be progressed between now and the end of 2020. This new inquiry will examine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social care sector, the wider issues impacting social care delivery that have come to light because of COVID-19 and how those lessons can be applied in the future to improve social care systems and delivery in Scotland

### Care Home Visits

- 7.1 National guidance now sets out how care home visiting may be re-introduced while minimising the risks to residents, staff and visitors. The guidance outlines a staged approach, where stage 1 – essential visits only to people in exceptional circumstances or at the end of their lives - has been in operation throughout the pandemic. Relaxation of visiting restrictions will be approached in three further stages, moving through outdoor visiting [in place since 3 July 2020], indoor visiting by one designated person and eventually to a controlled programme of outdoor and indoor visiting.
- 7.2 Garden visits under Stage 2 are currently in place. These are operated on an appointment basis and the designated family member is offered a weekly visit, with the visit lasting no more than 30 minutes.
- 7.3 The move to stage 3, which includes indoor and outdoor visiting, will allow other family members to see residents and will be welcomed. Outdoor visiting remains subject to weather conditions and visits within the care home will support visits to residents who are frail in greater comfort. Social distancing measures will remain and visits will continue to be subject to booking to ensure management and oversight of numbers within the care homes. Visits will continue to be limited to 30 minutes at this stage.
- 7.4 Each stage of easing of restrictions will be assessed nationally depending on scientific advice and the progress of the infection rates. If risks are identified, restrictions may be resumed. The guidance is set and reviewed by the Care Homes Clinical and Professional Advisory Group [CPAG]. The stages set out in the table below show the precautions to be taken to safeguard resident, visitor and staff safety.

Stage readiness	Stage 1*	Stage 2* [3/7/20]	Stage 3* [24/7/20]	Stage 4*
Visiting	-Essential visits [end of life, stress and distress behaviours	-Garden visits with 1 key/designated visitor & appropriate social distancing -Essential visits indoors	-Indoor visits with 1 key/designated visitor -Garden visits of multiple visitors & appropriate social distancing -Essential visits as before	-Controlled visiting -Resumption of communal life -Garden visits with children & appropriate social distancing -Essential visiting as before
Communal Activity	-Avoidance of communal areas	Residents use of outdoor areas in limited numbers in homes without an ongoing outbreak. Avoidance of communal areas.  <b>Must be with:</b> -PPE -Staff wearing PPE -Strict cleaning regimes -Visitor wearing covering or face mask.	All residents use of outdoor areas and communal areas in limited numbers in homes without an ongoing outbreak with full distancing and IPC  <b>Must be with:</b> -Physical distancing -Staff wearing PPE -Strict cleaning regimes - Visitor wearing face covering or mask	All residents use of indoor and outdoor communal areas in limited numbers in homes without an outbreak - full physical distancing and IPC.  <b>Must be with:</b> -Physical distancing -Staff wearing PPE -Strict cleaning regimes -Visitor wearing face covering or mask
Setting	Homes with previous outbreaks must be cleared by HPS/DPH – 28 days from last symptoms of any resident. <b>No visiting apart from essential visits in homes with an outbreak.</b>			
Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PPE</li><li>• Resident consent</li><li>• Choice of designated visitor</li><li>• Screening visitors</li><li>• Care Home risk assessment</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visiting protocol</li><li>• Scheduled visits</li><li>• IPC and cleaning protocols</li><li>• Leaflet for families and designated visitor</li></ul>	
*Subject to review and ratification by scientific advisory committee.				

7.5 As previously intimated to the Emergencies Board, the leaflet “Visiting your Relative Living in a Care Home” [June 2020] was circulated to all residents’ family/significant others and will be updated to reflect each move to the next stage. In terms of the HSCP operated care homes and extra care units, contact will be made with the family members to update them on visiting arrangements and changes to the national guidance. The changes to visiting arrangements will also be discussed with the care homes on the weekly clinician led call to support appropriate application of the guidance.

7.6 **Health and Sport Committee of the Scottish Parliament – Social Care Inquiry**  
The Health and Sport Committee scrutinises the spending of approximately 50% of the Scottish Budget. The Committee had agreed to undertake pre-budget scrutiny of the 2021-22 budget in an initial national programme, launched in June 2019, designed to take a strategic approach to explore how social care could be co-ordinated, commissioned and funded differently in the future. The intention of the programme was to:

- Support integration authorities, the wider sector, and communities in planning and taking forward changes
- Advise Scottish Ministers if national changes or interventions are required



- Raise awareness of the role of social care support in Scotland and its social and economic value
- 7.7 Due to the pandemic, scrutiny of social care was paused. The pandemic and required response highlighted some key issues in respect of care homes and the wider provision of social care. Following evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport on 4 June 2020 it was decided to begin scrutiny on a new social care inquiry. This new inquiry will build on the work to date and will:
- Examine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social care sector
  - Examine wider issues impacting social care delivery that have come to light because of COVID-19
  - Explore how those lessons can be applied in the future to improve social care systems and delivery in Scotland
- 7.8 The Committee intends to take evidence from relevant bodies in August and September 2020. Targeted engagement will also look at home care between August and October 2020 to add to the existing evidence base on social care. Evidence collected in Committee sessions will be reviewed during October and November 2020. It is intended that the inquiry will contribute to the Scottish Government's proposed review of adult social care.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the Council is experiencing significant financial pressure 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 and services and facilities are reopened on a phased basis, however notwithstanding, the Council will experience significant financial impact and disruption that will require it to draw heavily on all its financial reserves and from which it is likely to take some time to recover. Current outcome estimates indicate a full year impact in 2020/2021 of up to £55M for the Council, with comparable additional funding announced of around £9.5M to begin to address this impact. This financial position will continue to be subject to ongoing review and updating, for example in line with the changes being planned in relation to the operation of schools in August. Additionally, as outlined previously to the Board, a report outlining recommended changes to the Council's financial strategy in response to the COVID19 impact is scheduled to be presented to the September Council meeting.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – the Council's workforce represents a major part of the local population and as such has been 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. Working closely with national government, partners and trade unions the Council has been required to actively manage and redeploy staffing resources to meet the most critical services over this exceptional emergency period and will continue to do so as the Council moves forward through the Government's phased routemap to reopen services and facilities.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – COVID-19 has impacted on the operations of Council partners and on services to the community. This paper highlights the work undertaken to mitigate this impact as far as possible, to maintain essential services for the safety and wellbeing of the community and to reopen services as partner organisations and the Council are able to do so following the Government routemap.
4. **Legal** – N/A
5. **Property/Assets** – Initial planning for the phased reopening of non-essential office accommodation in line with requirements for physical distancing and to protect employees, members and customers has indicated that the capacity of some office buildings will be around 25% of previous normal occupancy levels. The use of property and assets will be prioritised to support essential services, necessary access to equipment and facilities, customer demand for necessary face to face service provision and the welfare of employees.

Adjustments to physical assets will be required in the form of physical screens and the implementation of one-way access and egress arrangements required to ensure the safety of employees, members and customers using facilities.

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. There will be an ongoing requirement to support employees with appropriate equipment and training to allow them to continue to work flexibly and from home as a default wherever possible.
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 up to date government and health guidance. As services are prioritised and planned to restart or reopen appropriate health and safety assessments are being carried out to ensure that working processes and procedures have been updated, cleaning arrangements and equipment are reviewed and relevant training, guidance, and where required PPE have been provided to ensure that employee and customer safety is maintained.
9. **Procurement** – As the lockdown period progressed the availability of some key materials and PPE supplies was under pressure across all UK organisations. Procurement teams are maintaining ongoing monitoring of the supplies of these products and operational services will ensure appropriate levels of stocks are maintained to meet the future needs of their services as the phased reintroduction of services and facilities proceeds in line with the Government routemap.
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 or access to facilities or equipment restricted. 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. As services are prioritised and planned to restart or reopen appropriate risk assessments are being carried out to ensure that working processes and procedures have been updated to ensure that employee and customer safety is maintained.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable
13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable

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#### List of Background Papers

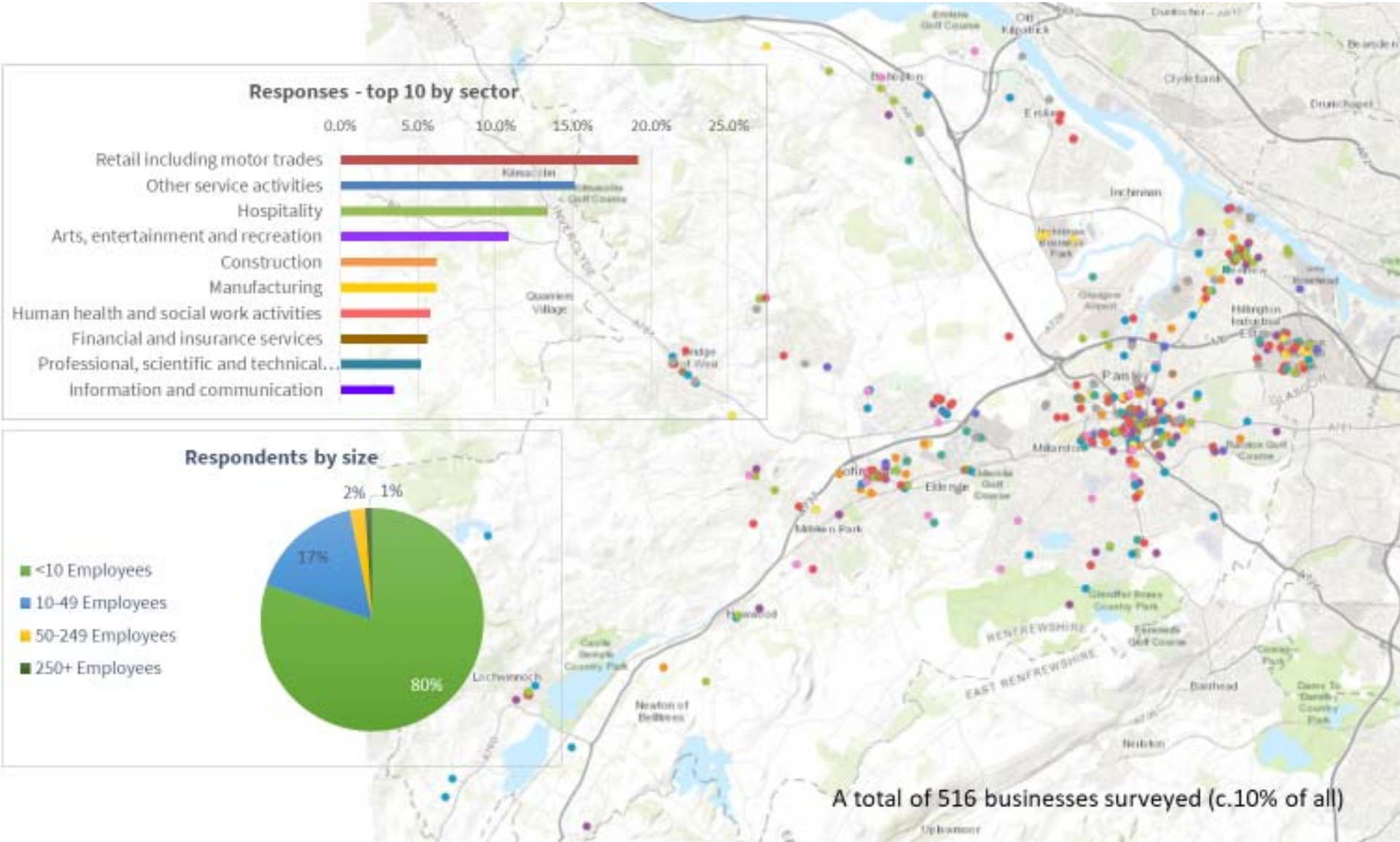
None

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Appendix 1: Renfrewshire Business Survey Responses By Location / Sector / Size Of Business







9 July 2020

Dear Mr Quinn

## **HM Inspectors of Education review of Renfrewshire Council local authority phasing delivery plan**

HM Inspectors of Education have carried out a desk top review of your local authority phasing delivery plan. HM Inspectors of Education acknowledge that you may have additional information or guidance not contained within the plan submitted.

In reviewing your plan, HM Inspectors of Education have considered the criteria set out in [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): strategic framework for reopening schools, early learning and childcare provision](#) and [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): reopening schools guide](#).

Your plan has set out clearly the following:

- A comprehensive approach towards the transition to a full return for all children and young people to education. Agreed minimum hours for learning are 40% full days in primary and 46% in secondary, with approaches to modelling different scenarios for a return to full-time education being clearly outlined in your three phased recovery plan - respond, recover and review.
- Proportionate approaches to risk assessment are clear, and public health considerations are integral in planning. Your strategic vision is supplemented by a range of well-considered operational plans, and a clear focus on ensuring wellbeing of children, young people and staff. Each establishment has also developed their own context-specific business continuity plan.
- The sound governance arrangements in place ensuring well-paced developments with an appropriate level of scrutiny. Progress has been communicated regularly and shared widely with all stakeholders, who have had opportunities to respond to your plans through extensive engagement with you.
- Your approach to maximising your workforce. Within the capacity and capability domain of the Build Back Better Recovery Plan, a staffing needs analysis, in line with current advice in relation to physical distancing was carried out. This identified the number of additional staff needed in each of your schools, over and above core staffing entitlement, to support delivery of the proposed model for the reopening of schools.
- The additional costs involved in the implementation of your recovery plan. This includes additional costs for staffing, and for implementing public health guidelines on physical distancing. This has been calculated in considerable detail, with indicative costs reflecting different scenarios.

- The significant investment in staffing which has been made to increase the workforce considerably to support the aspiration of allowing as many children and young people as possible to return to schools and settings.
- Systems and approaches to monitoring the implementation of school and early learning and childcare settings plans. Individual establishments are encouraged and empowered to make decisions for children and young people in their context.
- An appropriate focus on the use of risk assessments as part of a carefully-staged approach to make appropriate provision for children and young people with additional support needs. This includes the use of spaces and the levels of staffing required. Proportionate approaches to risk assessment and public health considerations are integral to your planning. Your strategic vision is supplemented by a range of well-considered operational plans, and a clear focus on ensuring wellbeing of children, young people and staff.
- The way education staff have worked with staff in social services to identify and support vulnerable children and families. At establishment level, senior staff have prioritised communication with and support for vulnerable children and families.
- There are clear plans in place which allow establishments to monitor the impact which the COVID-19 pandemic has had on all children and young people. There is an emphasis on using existing resources to ensure that a needs-based approach is continued to be taken for all children and young people.

As you continue to engage in your contingency planning it would be helpful to include or signpost information relating to the following:

- Further details of the work that you have taken forward to maximise accommodation capacity through the use of alternative accommodation, working with community partners and repurposing spaces.

**HM Inspectors of Education**  
July 2020