
To: Emergencies Board

On: 24 April 2020

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Update on COVID-19

1. Background

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the Council's current arrangements and response to the ongoing international Coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 An update is provided on the numbers of cases and deaths at both Scottish and UK levels; the recent publication of updated figures and analysis from the National Records of Scotland; and the statement made by the First Minister on 23 April 2020 on the publication of a strategy paper on the proposed approach to be followed to ease restrictions following the current period of lockdown.
- 1.3 Section 4 of the report provides a financial update which highlights the impact on the national economy and Scottish Government funding being put in place to mitigate this, as well as the steps being taken to track and record additional COVID – 19 related expenditure at a local level.
- 1.4 Section 5 of the report highlights the support being provided for communities and provides information in relation to Care Homes as well as up to date figures for the numbers and types of support being provided to some of the most vulnerable residents in Renfrewshire. Information is also provided on arrangements being made to establish neighbourhood hubs, volunteering arrangements locally and preparations for early release of a small number of prisoners over coming weeks.
- 1.5 Section 6 outlines some changes made within the Council and its key partners to respond to the pandemic – protecting employees and protecting the organisation. In particular, it provides an update on the current position in relation to availability of PPE, and the development of employee testing as well as information on the development of data returns expected at a national level on the operational impact of the pandemic. The current position in relation to the impact of shielding procedures and absence on the availability of employees is also provided.

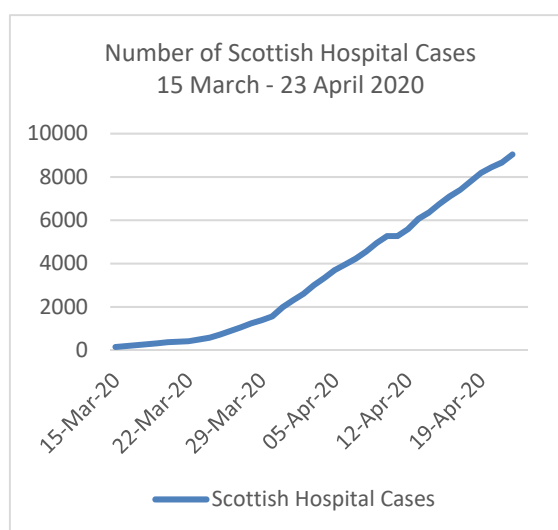
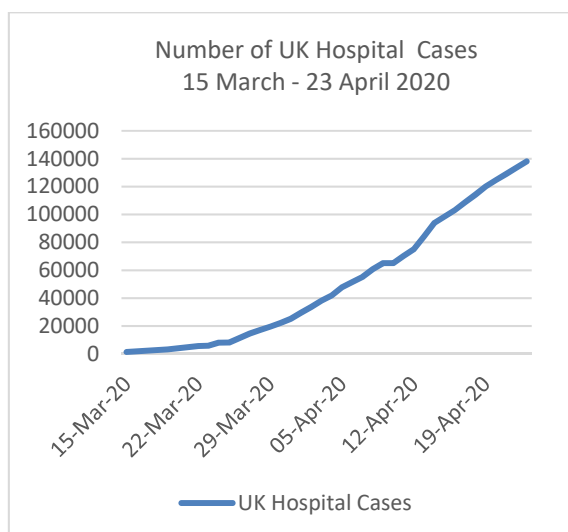
- 1.6 Section 7 provides a short update on service changes that have not previously been reported in relation to the HSCP; Children's Services; Communities, Housing and Planning; and Environment and Infrastructure Services.
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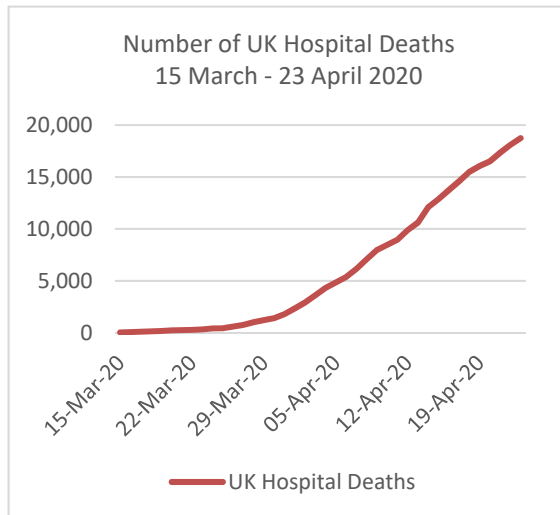
2. Recommendations

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

- 3.1 Currently there are 138,078 confirmed cases of COVID – 19 in hospitals in the UK up from 103,093 reported on 17 April 2020. There have been 18,738 deaths in hospital across the UK (up from 13,729 in the last report). In Scotland there are now 9,409 confirmed hospital cases (up from 7,102) and 1,120 deaths (up from 779). Of these, 2,250 cases are within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area (up from 7,742). In GGCHB area there were 564 people in hospital (down from 606) (49 in intensive care – down from 70) as either confirmed or suspected cases.
- 3.2 The following graphs illustrate the significant increase in both cases and deaths since 15 March 2020.





- 3.3 What the graphs above continue to demonstrate is that while the overall numbers reflect the population differences across the UK and Scotland and are therefore very different in magnitude in relation to hospital recorded cases and deaths, the trend and escalation in numbers of cases and deaths in Scotland is very similar to the picture seen across the rest of the UK and reflects the proportion of the UK population that live within Scotland. The trend is currently still increasing.
- 3.4 The National Records of Scotland now publish a weekly report which indicates the numbers of deaths registered in Scotland that note COVID-19 as a factor in the death. These figures show that as at 19 April 2020, there had been a total of 1,616 deaths registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate. (The figure for hospital deaths reported at that time was 903)
- 3.5 The death registration statistics also reveal:
- Of the total number of deaths registered 13 to 19 April there were 651 where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate (34% of the total)
 - This was an increase of 41 from the previous week (6 April to 12 April)
 - 33% of COVID-19 deaths registered to date relate to deaths in care homes
 - 56% of deaths were in hospitals
 - 10% of deaths were at home or in non-institutional settings
 - 74% of all deaths involving COVID-19 to date were of people aged 75 or over
- 3.6 Members will be aware from recent media coverage and press briefings from UK government ministers that information from the rest of the UK demonstrates that this picture is not unique to Scotland – or indeed to the UK.
- 3.7 On 21 April 2020 the Cabinet Secretary for Health announced new measures for supporting care homes in Scotland including that COVID-19 patients discharged to a care home should be given two negative tests before discharge and that other new residents of care homes should be tested and isolated for 14 days in addition to normal social distancing measures. Further information in relation to the position in Care homes in Renfrewshire is presented in Section 5 of this report.

- 3.8 On 23 April 2020 the First Minister published a government strategy paper setting out a proposed approach to be followed to ease restrictions following the current period of lockdown. The First Minister was clear that steps taken will be small and slow, and that there may be a requirement to reimpose restrictions from time to time. She was also clear that the pace of change would be driven by data and overall changes would be introduced in a phased and careful manner. Testing, tracing and isolation will be driving the approach being taken in coming months. In particular, she highlighted that it is only when it is clear, from data, that the spread of the virus is under control that any easing in restrictions can be commenced. The message at present, to stick with the rules of the current lockdown was reinforced.
- 3.9 Examples of changes that might be expected as restrictions are eased were given – although the First Minister stressed that no decisions have been taken as yet. She emphasised that as lockdown was eased a balance will need to be struck, with only the businesses that can ensure social distancing being reopened and the redesign of services such as schools and education taking place, with not all pupils returning at once or being in the buildings at the one time. It was made clear that it is likely that some form of shielding will be required for the old and vulnerable for some time to come – potentially for the rest of this year and possibly into next. Big gatherings and events of any type are likely to be off for some months to come.
- 3.10 The CMT have already started considering the longer-term impact of the virus pandemic on services and service provision across the Council and on how the Council can continue to support communities and protect vulnerable residents as the lockdown period begins to be eased in some aspects. The information that was presented on 23 April 2020 and the associated government paper will be factored into this exercise and further information on proposals for recovery will be brought back to future meetings of the Emergencies Board.

4. Financial Update

National Economic Update

- 4.1 The Chief Economist to the Scottish Government provided a State of the Economy update this week outlining the unprecedented economic impact on the national economy as a direct consequence of the measures taken to respond to this public health emergency.
- 4.2 The messages emerging from the Chief Economists update are significant and, in many ways, unprecedented not just in scale but also in nature. The impact both in the immediate term but also longer term will have inevitable consequences for public finances and indeed may in time, depending upon how long restrictive measures are in place, limit the capacity of the state to provide supportive interventions in the economy, which could increase the extent of longer term damage caused by this crisis. The key messages, outlined in his report were:
- The COVID-19 pandemic is a health crisis that has now become an economic crisis. The priority has been to protect public health with social distancing measures quickly introduced to contain the spread of COVID-19. This has necessitated the shutdown of economic activity in many parts of the Scottish economy and it is expected economic output will fall by around a third during the current period of social distancing.
 - It is important however, to recognise that this is no ordinary economic downturn. Many productive, profitable and sustainable businesses have been required to temporarily close, bringing immediate financial stress. The policy response to the pandemic has also been unprecedented - with a combination of fiscal, monetary and macro-prudential measures put in place to maintain cashflow, incomes, wages and employment across the economy. This reflects both the indiscriminate nature of the crisis and the need to protect productive capacity.
 - The collapse in economic activity is also steeper and faster than in previous downturns and it has similarly impacted our major trading partners. The latter means many of the country's external markets both for goods and supplies are also impacted. The sudden cessation of economic activity has focussed the economic policy response on maintaining productive capacity, which in many cases has meant supporting temporarily closed businesses. The analysis suggests that there could be a 33% fall in GDP during the current period of social distancing. This mirrors the findings from business surveys in March and is consistent with the estimates from the OECD, OBR etc. on the scale of the impact on GDP.
 - These figures are unprecedented in scale but so is the nature of this crisis and the policy response. The analysis highlights the economic damage of a scenario where social distancing measures are lifted and then reintroduced, with the potential for a 'W' shaped recovery. As such, the path of economic recovery remains uncertain for several reasons:
 - Firstly, as business and society re-opens it is expected that there will be a reversal of the output contraction for many parts of the domestic economy. However, not all sectors will come back immediately as external demand, consumer tastes, and business models will have changed significantly. This will present challenges and opportunities for different segments of the business base reflecting their exposure to different economic channels - both external and domestic.

- Secondly, it is anticipated that the country will continue to lose productive capacity as the restrictions in economic activity continue and this will lengthen the recovery period. This is likely to be mirrored in the labour market with a significant rise in unemployment and the scarring effects this has on individuals and communities.
- Thirdly, the longer the measures are in place, the harder the impact will be on public finances and the less scope there will be for a fiscal stimulus in the recovery, with a greater risk of wider economic contagion.
- Finally, the Chief Economist outlines that it is expected that the economy will recover but the path and speed of recovery will mirror the success in managing the health crisis and will require careful planning and management of economic activity so that the country is able to operate in a different but productive manner.

4.3 The fallout from this crisis, will to be to once again place the national economy and subsequently public finances under a new level of strain, pressure and uncertainty, at both a UK and Scottish level, which only a few weeks ago did not exist. The knock on impact is that beyond even the immediate crisis and measures taken by the Council to support local communities, the financial outlook for the Council will once again move into a period of heightened uncertainty as the longer term consequences unfold, both in terms of public finances but also the financial pressures that emerge from the service demands that are made as part of the longer term economic and social recovery period for communities.

Scottish Government Funding

- 4.4 As previously outlined for the Board, a level of financial assurance has already been provided by the Scottish Government in relation to additional spend being incurred by IJB's. This commitment provides that reasonable additional costs incurred by IJB's as part of their mobilisation arrangements to bolster capacity in Social Care as part of supporting the emergency in the NHS, will be funded where this is immediately recorded and shared with the Scottish Government through national reporting arrangements. This commitment was provided through a letter to COSLA from the Director General for Social Care and Chief Exec of NHS in Scotland and local IJB staff are actively supporting this process.
- 4.5 At this stage, IJB mobilisation plans have been approved by the Scottish Government, including, in principle, the additional spend plans they contain. It is therefore expected that the forecast additional circa £10 million of spend on adult social care functions will be funded via additional resources provided by the Scottish Government.
- 4.6 As previously reported to the Board, similar funding assurances for Local Government were agreed between Scottish Government and COSLA, and approved by the COSLA Group Leaders on 27th March. This has been formally followed up by a letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance which will underpin the ongoing discussions between COSLA and the Scottish Government as cost monitoring arrangements get underway.

- 4.7 To date, the Scottish Government has distributed just under £3.5 million to the Council through a range of funding streams to support the Council's response as summarised in the table below:

Overview of Funding	Distribution to Renfrewshire Council
£50m hardship fund for Local Government with full flexibility on how this can be utilise recognising the wide range of costs which councils will be incurring.	£1.632 million
<p>£45m additional funding for Scottish Welfare Fund, administered by Local Government for Community Care and Crisis Grants.</p> <p>This is in addition to the current £38m annual funding.</p> <p>Renfrewshire receives £1.261m of the original £38m with an additional £0.782m being received from the additional £22m that has been distributed immediately. This provides a total of circa £2.2m to support the SWF activities.</p> <p>The remaining £23m is being kept back by the Scottish Government with a view to targeting it to areas of greatest need and therefore there may be an opportunity to secure a greater proportionate share in coming month</p>	£0.782 million
£50m for increased eligibility for social security benefits and increased cost to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme - this fund will provide "extra headroom" for both Council Tax Reduction and Scottish Social Security payments. At present this remains undistributed and therefore it is unknown how much will be directed toward Renfrewshire.	Distribution yet to be confirmed
£30m of the Food Fund is initially being made available to local authorities for structured public sector responses working with local resilience partnerships to support households who may experience barriers in accessing food as well as supporting replacement arrangements for free school meals during the exceptional closure period.	£1.063 million

- 4.8 In addition to these announced funding streams and distributions, COSLA have made direct representations for the recently confirmed £155 million of Barnett consequential funding flowing to Scotland to be passed directly on to local government in Scotland. These Barnett consequential adjustments follow a further £1.6 bn funding announcement for local government in England by the UK Government. Should this be directly distributed to local government, it would be expected that the Council would receive a broad share in the region of £4.5 million - £5.0 million.
- 4.9 It is expected however, that the level of net financial pressures that will be experienced by the Council will significantly exceed this level of funding and therefore the ongoing engagement by COSLA with the Scottish Government remains critically important to ensure the response of local government to both the immediate emergency situation and critically the subsequent recovery period is fully and appropriately funded through national arrangements.

Tracking of Net Financial Impact

- 4.10 Officers are continuing to actively engage with national arrangements organised through COSLA, SOLACE and Directors of Finance, to complete a standardised financial template to capture the “*net additional costs to Local Government*” arising as a direct result of COVID-19.
- 4.11 The template was agreed with Scottish Government and issued to Councils for the first draft completion cycle to be completed this week, at which point a read-across all authorities draft returns will be undertaken to assess the overall reasonableness of initial drafts before submission to the Scottish Government to facilitate and inform ongoing dialogue and discussions.
- 4.12 This initial cut of the net additional cost tracking will be updated every two weeks and in the first instance is focusing on an assumed 12-week period running through to approximately the end of June.
- 4.13 As previously outlined to the Board and as now captured in the monitoring template, the net additional costs will cover a wide range of issues including:
- Additional Staffing Costs particularly to fill gaps in service and offer additional services.
 - Additional supplies spend – enhanced PPE spend, set up costs for new or enhanced service provision etc.
 - Additional welfare support arrangements – increased welfare fund payments, food deliveries, replacement school meal provision.
 - Additional support to the vulnerable across the geography of the council area.
 - Anticipated leakage in council tax income and increased council tax reduction awards.
 - Increased debt write-off across a number of debt streams.
 - Sales and fees income foregone due to the closure of facilities e.g. RL estate, car parks etc
 - Support to key suppliers through ongoing contractual payments where no or limited service may be provided e.g. early learning providers.
 - Planned budget efficiencies, linked predominantly to the Right for Renfrewshire Programme, where delivery is now stalled or suspended over the course of 2020/21.
 - Anticipated cost increases that are likely to emerge on the wide range of capital investment projects being progressed by the Council, all of which are at different stages of procurement and or delivery. This potential impact is extremely uncertain but is likely, given the overall size of the capital programme which runs to several hundred million pounds, to involve significant additional costs. Such costs will emerge from associated with extensions of time provided to contractors for projects that are already in live delivery, expected cost impacts from additional working requirements post lockdown, potential inflationary impacts from delayed procurement as well as potential inflation on supply chains and general market conditions as well as pre-emptive measures the Council may take to support suppliers to maintain continuity of project delivery and general support to the industry in line with Scottish Government guidance issued over recent weeks.

- 4.14 A overview of the submission from the Council will be provided to the board next week with future appropriate reporting cycles receiving updates in line with the proposed two-weekly update arrangements agreed with COSLA.
- 4.15 Earlier work has been completed in respect specifically to adult social care functions delivery via the HSCP as part of wider mobilisation plans submitted to the Scottish Government by all IJBs across the country. The initial submission from Renfrewshire, indicated that over the following three-month period through to end of June, it is estimated that additional costs of circa £10 million are projected to potentially emerge in seeking to maintain service delivery arrangements and support external providers.

5. Support for Communities

Care Homes

- 5.1 As reported in the media and highlighted in the analysis from the National Records of Scotland, there are a growing number of people who are symptomatic or who have died with COVID-19 related symptoms in care homes across Europe and in the UK. In Renfrewshire, the position has continued to develop given the nature of transmission and the short period of acute illness. The HSCP continues to closely monitor the impact on service delivery across all care groups.
- 5.2 The greatest impact is in the population of older people and people with underlying health conditions, in particular care homes. Renfrewshire has 22 care homes with an available bed capacity of 1,320 spaces. At the time of writing the three care homes and the four extra care units operated by the HSCP have no reported COVID-19 related symptoms or related deaths. These are extra care or residential care homes where the residents tend to be in better health than the resident group in the Nursing Home sector who are often receiving end of life care and have complex needs including dementia. Of the 22 care homes in Renfrewshire, 10 are self-reporting residents with COVID-19 related symptoms and COVID-19 related deaths.
- 5.3 The Scottish Government has now written to all Health Board Chief Executives to set out their expectations in relation to an enhanced system of assurance around the safety and wellbeing of care home residents and staff in response to the COVID-19 emergency. It requires all Health Boards to:
- Undertake an initial assessment of every care home in their area, either by telephone or direct visit by 24 April
 - Undertake a programme of associated visits to each local care home on a risk prioritised basis, as informed by the assessments carried out under the initial request
 - Ensure there is a robust pathway for workers, or people in their households, to testing with a single point of access; and that this has been clearly communicated to all employers in social care; both within the care home setting and employers providing care at home
- 5.4 Furthermore, on 21 April 2020 Cabinet Secretary for Health, Jean Freeman noted as part of her ministerial Statement that she will detail tailored additional steps to

protect staff and residents in care homes. These included some of the measures already outlined above, and some additional steps.

- Directors of Public Health to make assessments of how each care home is faring in their area and identify quickly any deficits that need to be rectified.
- A National Rapid Action Group to be established to provide clinical oversight of care homes, which will recognise that care homes are widely run by independent providers.
- The Care Inspectorate to be equipped to have an advanced role in assurance across the country.
- Testing for staff and residents is being expanded to include all symptomatic residents
- COVID-19 patients discharged to a care home should be given two negative tests before discharge.
- Other new residents of care homes to be tested and isolated for 14 days in addition to social distancing measures.
- Additional support to get students, social retirees and returners into the care system as quickly as possible via the Scottish Social Services Council portal

5.5 At NHSGGC Board level, the Director of Public Health is working with HSCP Chief Officers and others to agree how the above actions are taken forward. At a local level, as outlined previously, a number of steps have been taken to ensure that assistance and support is offered to the care homes within Renfrewshire. This includes:

- Daily contact with all care homes by the contracts team to ensure that they have full PPE supplies in place and to seek information on any COVID-19 related issues affecting residents
- Daily contact by the enhanced nurse led Care Home Liaison service to offer advice and support with a particular focus on the care homes who have the greatest level of need
- 'Just in Case' medication pack supplies in each care home to ensure end of life care and supporting medication can be offered immediately
- Sharing information on care homes with the local GP group following on from the discussion on registration of deaths
- Weekly meetings with the Care Inspectorate team and the Chief Social Work Officer to share information and ensure a consistent response
- Daily meetings [via Skype] of the Locality Management Team to actively monitor and respond to the changing situation for all providers

5.6 In addition, within care at home services there are a small but growing number of people living within their own homes with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 that are being supported by staff. Joint work is now also taking place between the HSCP, Housing Services and the range of sheltered housing providers to ensure support is in place for those teams and resident groups.

Support for Shielded Residents

5.7 Staff from the Customer Contact Centre and the Local Assistance Team continue to play a critical role in terms of both handling calls and providing support to local people in both the shielded and "high risk" groups.

- 5.8 Currently 4,300 people in Renfrewshire have received shielding letters, with a final batch of letters anticipated to be sent in the coming days following further work between Scottish Government and GPs to identify a further 569 individuals. To date the Council has received 2,326 calls through the local shielding helpline, and the Local Assistance Team have provided the following support:

	Total	Previous	Change since last week
Total number of individuals on shielding list in Renfrewshire	4869	4300	569
Total number of individuals on shielding list contacted	3410	756	2654
Number of individuals requiring food delivery only	987	760	227
Number of individuals requiring pharmacy delivery only	82	25	57
Number of individuals requiring food and pharmacy	100	63	37
Number of individuals requiring other services	4	1	3
Number of individuals in need of no services	2922	540	2382

- 5.9 The Local Assistance Team have also made proactive calls to all people on the initial shielded list. This is a significant achievement for the team, and 72% of these have resulted in a successful contact and discussion with the individual, whilst the remainder were either not answered or were incorrect contact details. The team will continue to make follow up calls to attempt to make contact with all shielded residents.
- 5.10 Over 400 Council tenants are included in the initial tranche of people identified by the Scottish Government as being in the Shielded Group. This number may increase in light of the further data received. Staff in the local assistance team are proactively contacting this group to offer specific support while local housing staff are continuing to make welfare calls to the wider tenant group who have not been contacted through the 'Shielding process'.

Group 2 National Helpline and Support for Vulnerable Residents

- 5.11 The "high risk" group 2 refers to those people who are being encouraged to contact a national helpline for support if they do not have access to family or community assistance. The Scottish Government has advised that this specifically relates to the following groups:
- People who cannot get online
 - People with a disability
 - People aged over 70 or who are pregnant
 - People requiring support with mental health and wellbeing and
 - People who would normally receive a flu jab.
- 5.12 The national helpline was launched on Tuesday 14th April and to date Renfrewshire Council has received 374 calls. It is anticipated that the numbers of calls directed to the national helpline may increase, with further promotional materials being sent directly to all households from the Scottish Government over the course of the next week to 10 days. Referrals from the calls are also being passed to the Local Assistance Team and will in future also be made through to the Neighbourhood Hubs currently being established. Links with local mental

health provision across Children's Services, Renfrewshire HSCP and third sector organisations are also being developed, with active work underway to strengthen local provision and access to specific support for children, families and adults. Overall the total numbers of people supported are noted in the table below.

	Group 1 Shielded	Group 2 Helpline	Other Vulnerable Groups	National Brakes Deliveries (Group 1 only)	Total Supported
Food	297	679	575	690	Food - 2241
Medicine	182	259			Medicine - 441
Other	4	52			Other - 56

Establishment of Neighbourhood hubs

- 5.13 Officers within the Chief Executive's Service have been working very closely for a number of weeks to support the development of a Renfrewshire wide network of local community groups and organisations to help local people and families affected by COVID-19. The network is working well together and recently collaborated around the distribution of a significant delivery of community food sourced through Fareshare.
- 5.14 Building on the humanitarian support provided to date, the Council will now work with community partners to establish community support networks - virtual neighbourhood hubs - across the 7 Local Partnership areas. Officers, partners and volunteers will work together to meet emerging local needs. The virtual hubs will focus on addressing some of the requests for support being received by the Council at a more local level, providing very localised support around shopping, food provision, digital access and health and wellbeing. Volunteers to support the neighbourhood hubs will be recruited in partnership with Engage Renfrewshire, from the Renfrewshire Volunteer Reserve Bank.

Volunteering

- 5.15 Local work in relation to volunteering continues to progress well in partnership with Engage Renfrewshire. The Renfrewshire Volunteer Reserve Bank is developing well and is connecting with the national campaigns around volunteering to link to local opportunities. 5 Volunteers have been recruited from the Reserve to support local community food deliveries on a weekly basis and up to 70 are being recruited currently to support the neighbourhood hubs. It is anticipated the volunteers will begin to support the hubs from next week. Regular communication is being made with those people that have signed up at a local level to update them on opportunities and to offer ongoing thanks for their support.
- 5.16 In addition, a recent mapping exercise undertaken by Engage Renfrewshire identified that there are over 600 volunteers active across Renfrewshire who are supporting people in relation to the current crisis. This exercise was based on information from 14 key groups providing direct food and resilience support, recognising that there are many more over and above this number currently operating at local levels.

Community Protection Arrangements – Early Prisoner Release

- 5.17 On 21 April 2020 the Justice Minister confirmed to the Scottish Parliament that he intended to lay regulations by the end of the month to allow the early release of a limited number of prisoners who are serving short sentences who are nearing the end of their current sentence. Once the regulations are laid in Parliament there will be an immediate implementation of the early release programme and this will run for four weeks.
- 5.18 The Minister noted that the decision to release some prisoners early was made to ensure the maintenance of security and good order in prisons and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of prisoners and staff. The decision was balanced with the needs of victims again ensuring that victims are advised of release where this is appropriate.
- 5.19 Only prisoners serving a sentence of less than 18 months and in the last three months of their time in custody will be considered for early release. The prisoners identified would already have been scheduled for release over the next three months. All of these prisoners would be released from custody with no statutory supervision in the community. They would have a right to request voluntary support from criminal justice services and this right continues even if they are released early.
- 5.20 The emergency legislation rules out the early release of prisoners convicted for sexual or terrorism offences and those who had a supervision order imposed as part of their sentence. The Minister has indicated that the regulations will rule out the early release of anyone serving a sentence for domestic abuse offences or those with non-harassment orders. Prison Governors will retain the power to veto any prisoner from early release where there is evidence the prisoner would present an immediate risk to an identified individual and a process is being established to ensure community consultation with key agencies prior to this decision being made.
- 5.21 Locally, criminal justice social work, housing services and health colleagues are reviewing and planning for those who are due to be released in the next three months, ensuring that services will be available for those who require them if released early. Through to the beginning of July 2020, there are 32 prisoners due for release as a result of them being in the last three months of their sentence. It is anticipated that around one third of these might be released on a phased basis in advance of their initial release date. Members can be assured that if any prisoners from Renfrewshire are released earlier than their planned date, services will be able to respond to ensure their needs are met and that community safety and protection remain the priority for staff across all services.

6. Support for Employees and Operational changes

Sourcing and Stocks of PPE

- 6.1 The system for the delivery of PPE [Personal Protective Equipment] to health and social care services has been further developed along the lines previously reported to Board. While the ongoing supply of the range of PPE remains an area of concern, there are sufficient supplies for health and social care services until Monday 27 April 2020, with further orders in the system. Across wider Council services, currently sufficient stocks are held for the next 7-14 days with additional orders also due for delivery within this timeframe.

Staff Testing

- 6.2 NHSGGC has established a system of testing for staff. This started approximately 14 days ago for NHS staff and was then expanded to include testing for all HSCP social care staff. Initially the priority was those staff who were isolating due to living in a household where someone else was symptomatic. This has now been extended to any staff who were themselves symptomatic. In opening up testing for social care staff, it was agreed that this would also include all social care staff working in the Council's children's social care services.
- 6.3 As the testing approach has developed and capacity grown, the testing has further expanded to include staff working in any local registered care services such as private nursing and residential homes. As a result of this further expansion, the NHSGGC testing service is now using the Glasgow Airport Testing Centre when its own service is at capacity. In addition, where a staff member does not have access to transport to attend a testing centre, there is an option for a small number of staff each day to take up home based testing.
- 6.4 The Glasgow Airport facility continues to primarily operate to meet the testing needs of NHS24 and Scottish Ambulance staff.

Data returns

- 6.5 The Council has been asked to submit various additional statistical returns to the Scottish Government in relation to Covid-19 related activity. Activity returns in relation to work around shielding are submitted twice weekly to the Scottish Government by the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning.
- 6.6 Two additional returns have also now been established. The first of these is a Risk, Vulnerability and Public Protection Dashboard in relation to protection issues which is required to be submitted to Scottish Government on a weekly basis. The data is intended to provide Scottish Ministers and Chief Officer Groups with regular and timely information in relation to COVID-19.
- 6.7 A further local government dashboard of data has also been developed by COSLA, which will capture data relevant to the local authorities response to the COVID -19 pandemic. The intention will be to help build an overall picture of the situation as it develops and highlight any emerging pressure points and issues that may need to be addressed at a national level.

Council Staffing Update

6.8 Amongst Renfrewshire Council employees there are currently 619 employees self-isolating either because they have symptoms; or because they have other people in their household experiencing symptoms: or because they are following government and health guidance. (This is a decrease from 622 reported on 9 April 2020). Of the 619, 213 are currently working from home.

6.9 The 619 are split across Services as follows:

Service	Number of employees
Chief Executive Services	4
Children's Services	270
Communities, Housing and Planning	35
Environment and Infrastructure	137
Finance and Resources	59
Health and Social Care Partnership	114
Council Total	619

6.10 The number of employees now being "shielded from social contact" in line with government and health guidance is 1,075, up from the figure of 1,028 reported on 9 April 2020. Of these 443 are currently working from home. Where employees are not able to carry out their normal duties from home, options for redeployment on a home working basis are being actively considered and put in place.

7. Service Updates

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

Service Update – Health and Social Care Partnership

- In line with previous reports to the Board social care services continue to be delivered to people with the most critical levels of need only. The HSCP continues to proactively manage capacity and demand pressures, including deploying staff to critical, front line services where appropriate.

Service Update – Children's Services

- Hub schools and nurseries continue to offer provision for emergency childcare for key workers. The school centres offering this facility to primary and secondary children are West Primary, St Mary's Primary, St James' Primary (Renfrew), Trinity High and West Johnstone Shared Campus. Nursery aged children are attending Hugh Smiley Nursery, Moorpark Nursery and West Johnstone Nursery. In addition, Riverbrae School has remained open to support children of key workers who have complex additional support needs. New applications continue to be received and allocated as necessary.
- Secondary school staff are ensuring the completed submission of estimate grades for all pupils being presented for national qualifications based on SQA guidance published this week. Head teachers are working collaboratively to ensure the estimated grades are validated at all levels before being submitted to SQA by the due date of 29th May.
- Throughout term 4, schools will continue to support the learning of children and young people through remote learning in line with recently published guidance by the Scottish Government. Many new and creative ways have

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

- Longer term recovery and restoration planning with managers and head teachers has now commenced to ensure recruitment of staff, service planning, continued learning and supported transition are established for all children and young people.
- Working across children's services (and with partners), mechanisms are in place at both school and Council wide to ensure regular contact and support for the most vulnerable children and families is maintained.
- The children's houses continue to provide safe care for the young people living in them with no significant challenges being experienced at this time. The fostering and adoption service continues to provide support to Renfrewshire's foster carers. The kinship care team remain in regular contact with carers to provide support and assistance where required. The social work locality teams and the children with disabilities team continue to operate services both in relation to the protection of the most vulnerable and advice and guidance to parents. The teams have undertaken a prioritisation assessment and those deemed highest risk/need are being visited on a regular basis. For those where the risk/need is lower regular telephone contact and support is being provided.
- Criminal justice services continue to supervise those subject to statutory orders in the community. At present, the unpaid work scheme remains suspended and the emergency legislation provides for an extension to the period of those required to undertake unpaid work to allow the completion of orders, once the current crisis is over. The staff from the unpaid work team are assisting in other areas of work including supporting community pharmacists with delivery of prescriptions.

Service Update – Communities Housing and Planning

- Environmental Health Officers have worked alongside the 5 other local authorities in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area to develop a temporary morgue to alleviate pressure on hospital morgues that might be experienced during this time. The facility is based at Hillington within the Glasgow City Council boundary and opened to Funeral Directors on Tuesday 21 April 2020. The site will be operational 7 days a week and will remain available until capacity at hospital morgues returns to a baseline level. Officers from Glasgow City Council and Renfrewshire Council will operate the site to ensure a dignified place of rest for the deceased within the health board area.
- A significant increase in the number of tenants who have applied for Universal Credit has been experienced, with 318 new applications for Universal Credit notified through the DWP portal system in the first 2 weeks of April (1-15 April 2020). This compares with only 218 applications received for the full month of April in 2019 and is consistent with national trends. Proactive contact is maintained with tenants applying for Universal Credit to provide advice and assistance in dealing with the 5 week waiting period for their first payment and signposting to specialist money advice services as appropriate to ensure any entitlement to assistance is maximised. Signposting to manage any financial pressures in the household includes welfare funds and support packages, emergency payments from the

DWP, energy efficiency measures, employability and health and wellbeing support depending on the needs expressed during welfare conversations.

- Movement within the housing stock has reduced significantly. In the first two weeks of April 2020 only 12 tenants terminated their tenancy, for the comparable period in April 2019 this figure was 49 tenants. Routine housing allocations are not taking place with priority given to identifying properties for potential use as temporary accommodation for homeless people and those applicants with a critical housing need - if the wraparound services can be arranged to allow the safe movement of people and facilitate safe living arrangements. Housing options advice is still available and staff are working through the waiting list proactively to contact applicants and review their housing circumstances and choices to make sure information held is as up to date as possible when normal letting activity resumes.
- The Health and Safety Executive have published guidance on Gas Servicing requirements taking account of COVID-19. The HSE is clear that Landlords should not suspend gas safety checks at this time, as they have a legal duty to ensure an annual gas safety check on each appliance and flue and to keep a record of each safety check. During the current outbreak there is a balance between ensuring people, including the vulnerable are protected from possibly fatal risks associated with carbon monoxide exposure or gas explosion, while protecting people from COVID-19. Gas servicing letters have been amended to take account of the COVID-19 situation and to reassure tenants of the steps that will be taken to safeguard them when completing the gas service as well as to provide the option for tenants who are in self-isolation, shielding or in the vulnerable group to defer the inspection to a later date.

Service Update – Environment and Infrastructure

- Waste collection services are continuing to operate as normal. In line with the Government lockdown and guidance on non-essential travel, Renfrewshire's 5 Household Waste Recycling Centres are closed, as is the case across Scotland. Communications advice is being provided through customer services and social media on ways to minimise waste and to reinforce the message that bin collection services are running as normal in Renfrewshire.
- In line with government guidance on social isolation and essential travel only, staff are currently deployed to deliver only essential frontline services. This means a number of day-to-day environment and infrastructure services have been suspended, including the grounds maintenance service. Grounds maintenance employees are currently supporting the continued delivery of waste collection services, burial services and the maintenance of cemeteries. Grass cutting services would normally commence in April. This service is currently suspended and has not begun as usual. This position will continue to be reviewed in line with Government guidance. It is likely that when the grass cutting service is able to commence it will require to be undertaken on a priority basis, with a reduced frequency of grass cutting and maintenance being experienced over the coming summer months.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – although at this stage not quantified, the Council will experience a wide range of significant financial pressures arising from the impact of the pandemic on the population as well as the economic and social disruption caused by the associated restrictions being deployed by national governments. Significant financial pressures will emerge in a wide range of forms from loss of income, exceptional service costs, significant increase in demand for services, the need for additional and new interventions, urgent and immediate support arrangements and services from the Council to help individuals, families and businesses across Renfrewshire as well as the Council's workforce. The Scottish Government has provided a range of immediate funding announcements to provide specific support via local authorities to both individuals and businesses as well as a degree of general funding to assist local authorities in managing immediate financial pressures. Engagement will continue between COSLA and the Scottish Government regarding further funding as the period of emergency extends, however notwithstanding, the Council will experience significant financial impact and disruption that will require it to draw heavily on all its financial reserves and which is likely to take some time to recover
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – the Council's workforce represents a major part of the local population and as such is being impacted directly by the spread of confirmed cases, but much more significantly by the public health directions for self-isolation given to those displaying symptoms and those with family members displaying symptoms as well as those in the at risk groups instructed to pro-actively implement strict social distancing arrangements. Full support and communication are being provided to all staff members to ensure they remain fully informed of the developing situation and where appropriate and practical, are being supported to work safely at home and or safely return to active work once recovered or free of recommended self-isolation periods. The impact of these factors will increase exponentially over coming days and weeks and therefore the scale of availability across the Council's workforce will come under unprecedented pressures. Working closely with national government, partners and trade unions the Council will by necessity be required to actively manage and redeploy staffing resources to meet the most critical services over this exception emergency period.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Covid-19 will impact on the operations of Council partners and on services to the community. This paper highlights the work being undertaken to mitigate this impact as far as possible and maintain essential services for the safety and wellbeing of the community.
4. **Legal** – N/A
5. **Property/Assets** – N/A
6. **Information Technology** – ICT are working to ensure staff have the capability to work from home wherever possible to reduce social contact in line with government and health guidance
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
8. **Health & Safety** – Advice and guidance is being given to protect the health and safety of employees and service users when carrying out priority services for the Council in line with government and health guidance

9. **Procurement** – N/A

10. **Risk** – Due to the severity of the global pandemic and Covid-19, there is a risk to the delivery of the services with staff levels being reduced. This is being closely monitored by the Emergency Management Team. Business Continuity Plans have been reviewed and the risk has been added to the Corporate Risk Register.

11. **Privacy Impact** - None.

12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable

13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable

List of Background Papers

None

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