

Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 07 May 2020	15:00	Skype meeting,

Present

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

Chair

Councillor McGurk, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

S Black, Chief Executive; S Quinn, Director of Children's Services; M Crearie, Director of Communities, Housing & Planning Services; G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, L Mahon, Head of Communications & Marketing, R Cooper, Economic Development Manager and P Fara, Web & Multi-media Editor (all Chief Executive's); J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice and Chief Social Work Officer (Children's Services); O Reid, Head of Communities & Public Protection and C Dalrymple, Communities & Regulatory Manager (both Communities, Housing & Planning Services); K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, P Murray, Head of ICT; L Neary, Head of Transformation, HR & OD, M Conaghan, Legal & Democratic Services Manager and D Low, Democratic Services Manager (all Finance & Resources); D Leese, Chief Officer and S Strachan, Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley)(both Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); V Hollows, Chief Executive (Renfrewshire Leisure); A Murray (Police Scotland); M Hill (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service); and D Mair, Civil Contingencies Officer (Civil Contingencies Service).

Recording of Meeting

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

Declarations of Interest

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

1 Minute of Previous Meeting

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Board held on 1 May 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Update on COVID 19

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive relative to the Council's current arrangements and response to the ongoing international Coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chief Executive invited M Hill, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and A Murray, Police Scotland, to provide an update on behalf on their respective services. They provided information on the impact on their services arising from COVID-19 as well as the activities being undertaken by their services to ensure that public safety was being maintained.

The report intimated that to reflect changes in the national situation, an update was provided on the numbers of cases and deaths at both Scottish and UK levels, which now included those deaths that occurred in care homes and the wider community as well as in hospitals. The recent publication of updated figures and analysis from the National Records of Scotland was also included. It was noted that at the date of this report there were 194,990 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in hospitals in the UK up from 165,221 reported on 1 May 2020. In Scotland there were now 12,709 confirmed hospital cases up from 11,353. Of these, 3,203 cases were within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board (GGCHB) area up from 2,759. In the GGCHB area there were 509 people in hospital as either confirmed or suspected cases, down from 548 of whom 30 were in intensive care, down from 43.

The report highlighted the support being provided for communities and provided information in relation to care homes and safeguarding and supporting vulnerable residents being looked after in their own homes. The report also included up-to-date figures on the numbers and types of support being provided to some of the most vulnerable residents in Renfrewshire, including arrangements being made locally to establish virtual neighbourhood hubs and volunteering.

The report provided an update on support to businesses and the distribution of business and self-employed grants.

A workforce planning update for the Council was also included in the report, together with an update on the current position in relation to availability of PPE and on employee testing procedures; and the current position in relation to the impact of shielding procedures and absence on the availability of employees and redeployments.

The report detailed the development of Contact Tracing, Test, Trace, Isolate and Support (TTIS) throughout Scotland. TTIS was seen as a critical tool for the UK and Scotland to minimise transmission of COVID-19, alongside other measures such as physical distancing and good hand hygiene.

The Board then heard from the Chief Executive in relation to the report generally; from the Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley), Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership in relation to care home cases; from the Communities & Regulatory Manager in relation to contact tracing; from the Economic Development Manager in relation to the award of grants to support businesses impacted by COVID-19; from the Head of Communications & Marketing in relation to the cancellation of the events programme to the end of October 2020; from the Director of Communities, Housing & Planning Services in relation to financial support for landlords and tenants; from the Head of Child Care & Criminal Justice (Chief Social Work Officer) on gender-based violence; and from the Director of Environment & Infrastructure in relation to funding available to promote the development of active transport infrastructure.

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; and

(b) That the response measures being put in place by the Council and partners as set out in this report be noted.

3 Education Placing Requests- Procedure During the Covid-19 Emergency

There was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to changes to the legislation dealing with placing requests for schools during the COVID-19 emergency to enable more flexibility in the way Councils were able to deal with the requests and any appeals that may be made where requests had been refused.

The report set out the statutory basis of the education placing request appeals process, detailed the existing process and timetable used to deal with placing request appeals by local authorities and advised that the Scottish Government had recognised that this process was not possible in the current circumstances. The Education (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 (the 2020 Regulations) allowed hearings to be held remotely in whole or in part by video link, telephone or other means of instantaneous multi-party communication. It was intended that the appeal hearings would be carried out by skype or other similar system that would allow appellants to make their case to the panel. The 2020 Regulations also provided further flexibility in terms of the timetable for dealing with placing requests: the Council now had 28 days to acknowledge receipt of an appeal rather than 5 working days; the period of notice to be given by the Council about the date of the hearing had been changed from 14 days to as soon as reasonably practicable; and appeal hearings, which previously had to take place within 28 days had now to be held as soon as reasonably practicable but within 3 months from the date the appeal was received.

DECIDED:

(a) That the changes made to the timetable and procedure for dealing with Education

Placing Requests by the 2020 Regulations, which came into force on 23 April 2020, be noted;

(b) That the procedure for dealing with Education Placing Requests and appeals during 2020 be noted;

(c) That it be agreed that the Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel be convened for the purposes of determining appeals during 2020 on dates to be set by the Convener in consultation with the Head of Corporate Governance; and

(d) That it be agreed that the Head of Corporate Governance make provision for appeals to be considered by the Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel to be dealt with remotely as outlined in paragraph 3.7 of the report.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

4 Confidential Updates

The Chief Executive advised that there was no confidential update.

DECIDED: That the position be noted.