

Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

Date	Time	Venue
Friday, 27 March 2020	11:00	skype meeting,

Present

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

Substitutes

Chair

Councillor McGurk, Convener, presided.

In Attendance

S Black, Chief Executive; 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, A Morrison, Head of Regeneration and R Cooper, Economic Development Manager (all Chief Executive's); O Reid, Head of Communities & Public Protection (Communities, Housing & Planning Services); J Trainer, Head of Childcare & Criminal Justice and G McKinlay, Head of Schools (both Children's Services); and K Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, R McGrath, Head of Customer and Business Services, L Neary, Head of Transformation, HR and OD, P Murray, Head of ICT and D Low, Democratic Services Manager (all Finance & Resources); D Leese, Chief Officer and S Strachan, Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley) (both Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership); V Hollows, Chief Executive (Renfrewshire Leisure) and D Mair, Senior Civil Contingencies Officer, Civil Contingencies Service.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Welcome from Chair

The Convener advised those present that it had not been possible to hold this meeting of the Emergencies Board in Renfrewshire House and that, for the first time, a meeting of the Council would take place by Skype. She outlined the procedure to be used to ensure that the meeting proceeded effectively.

1 Minute of Previous Meeting

There was submitted the Minute of meeting of the Emergencies Board held on 20 March 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

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As a result of the loss of her Skype connection, Councillor McGurk left the meeting during consideration of the following item of business. In her absence, Councillor Nicolson took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2 Update on Covid-19

There was submitted a report by the Chief Executive providing an overview of the Council's current arrangements and response to the ongoing international Coronavirus, Covid-19 pandemic.

The report intimated that the UK Government continued to monitor the situation and due to the rapidly developing nature of the pandemic, Senior Government Ministers continued to update the UK government and public on a daily basis. Each update required consideration and most had resulted in changes to the Renfrewshire Council approach and mitigation arrangements when released.

The Chief Executive updated the statistics included in the report, intimating that there were now 11,658 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the UK, including 894 confirmed cases in Scotland. The report highlighted the implications of the lock down implemented by the Scottish and UK Governments and set out the measures contained in emergency legislation, the Coronavirus Act 2020, which had been brought forward by the UK Government.

The report advised that vulnerable people had been asked to take steps to socially distance themselves for a period of around 12 weeks. In addition, letters would be sent by the NHS to a sub-group of these people that were deemed at most significant risk due to their underlying health conditions. This group of people would be asked to completely

socially isolate themselves for a period of 12 weeks. The Head of Policy and Commissioning set out the Council's humanitarian response to this situation including linking with partner agencies, identifying the issues this isolating group of people would be facing, ensuring that families with children who qualified for free school meals had access to food and other services and delivering food packs to vulnerable people. She also advised that the Council had distributed surplus foodstuffs held by it to partner agencies and community groups for distribution. Information was also provided in relation to the co-ordinated and consistent provision of services by community pharmacies and other joined-up working with the Health and Social Care Partnership.

A further significant development outlined in the report related to the packages of support offered to businesses by the UK Government and which would be delivered by local authorities. The Economic Development Manager provided an update on business grants, advising that an online application form for financial support had gone live on the Council website on Tuesday 24 March. Over 1,000 online applications had been received to date and a team of officers was answering telephone queries and assessing forms submitted. Methods of making payments to businesses would be considered once resources had been transferred to the Council from the Scottish Government. The Head of Customer and Business Services provided an update on non-domestic rates relief. She advised that the 1.6% increase in non-domestic rates for all businesses would not be implemented and that there would be 100% relief for businesses in the retail, leisure and hospitality sector. The annual non-domestic bills had yet to be issued and this would happen once guidance had been received from the Scottish Government on the application of the rates relief. Information for businesses would be published in a suitable format on the Council website.

The report intimated that a meeting of the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel had been held on Wednesday 25 March and that ongoing contact was being maintained with the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses locally. The Head of Regeneration provided an update on support for businesses, advising that he had participated in the Economic Leadership Panel meeting held on Wednesday 25 March and he highlighted the nature of the discussions that had taken place at the meeting.

In relation to the ongoing operation of the Council, the report provided updates on the provision of Council services. The Acting Head of Health & Social Care (Paisley), Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership provided an update on the actions being taken by local health services. The Chief Executive highlighted the thousands of staff working successfully from home and praised the commitment of staff to maintain services wherever possible.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the current national and local situation with regards to Covid-19 and the current plans and guidance from both the UK and Scottish Governments be noted;
- (b) That the current position and response measures being put in place by the Council be noted;
- (c) That it be noted that the emergency provisions in the Coronavirus Bill had now been approved by Parliament and that the Council was awaiting information on when those provisions would come into force; and
- (d) That the temporary suspension of charging in Council owned car parks to support key

workers be noted and that it be noted that normal traffic restrictions e.g. double yellow lines would continue to apply.

3 Substitute Board Members

Under reference to item 1 of the meeting of this Board held on 20 March 2020, there was submitted a report by the Director of Finance & Resources relative to the appointment of up to two substitute members for each Board member to attend the Board should the Board member not be available. The report detailed the substitutes nominated for each member.

DECIDED:

(a) That it be noted that the substitute members for Councillors Marie McGurk, Michelle Campbell and Iain Nicolson would be Councillors Jim Paterson and John Shaw, in that order of priority;

(b) That it be noted that the substitute members for Councillor Eddie Devine would be Councillors Jim Sheridan and Karen Kennedy, in that order of priority; and

(c) That it be noted that the substitute members for Councillor Alistair MacKay would be Councillors John McIntyre and Neill Graham, in that order of priority.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Board resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items 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 provided a verbal confidential update to those present.

DECIDED: That the update be noted.