

Minute of Meeting Emergencies Board

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

Present

Councillor Jacqueline Cameron, Councillor Michelle Campbell, Councillor Eddie Devine, Councillor Andy Doig, Councillor Jim Harte, Councillor Alistair Mackay, Councillor Eileen McCartin, 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; G McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure; A Russell, Director of Finance & Resources; L McIntyre, Head of Policy & Commissioning, A Morrison, Head of Regeneration; L Mahon, Head of Communications & Marketing; 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 Feeney, Enterprise Architect, L Mullin, Principal HR & OD Adviser 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); D Mair, Civil Contingencies Manager (Civil Contingencies Service); Superintendent D Lang (Police Scotland); and Group Commander M Hill (Scottish Fire and Rescue 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 McEwan.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Campbell declared an interest in item 2 of 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.

Councillor McCartin declared a non-financial interest in respect of item 2 of the agenda as she was a member of the Board of Renfrewshire Leisure Limited. Councillor McCartin indicated that as she had a general dispensation from the Standards Commission which allowed her to take part and to vote in relation to such matters it was her intention to 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 3 July 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, no COVID-19 deaths had been recorded in Renfrewshire in the week to 12 July 2020 and no deaths from COVID-19 had been recorded in Scotland on seven 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 had reportedly died with COVID-19 since 9 May 2020. Since 1 June 2020 overall numbers of deaths in Renfrewshire had been in line with the 5-year average. This was 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 until the 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 600 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 9 new cases were being identified per day across Scotland. National Records of Scotland figures showed 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 was the third week in a row the total number of deaths had been lower than the average.

The report intimated that there were currently 291,313 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in hospitals in the UK up from 313,483 reported on 3 July 2020. In Scotland there were now 18,373 confirmed hospital cases (up from 18,259). Of these, 4,890 cases were within the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area (up from 4,858). In GGCHB area there were 187 people in hospital (down from 199) with fewer than five in intensive care as either confirmed or suspected cases.

The report intimated that there had now been 44,968 deaths across the UK (up from the 43,906 deaths reported on 3 July 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 4,187 deaths registered in Scotland where COVID-19 was mentioned on the death certificate – up 13 from 4,155 deaths registered up to 5 July 2020. In Renfrewshire, a total of 206 people had died with COVID-19 since the outbreak of the virus. Of this total figure, 99 had died in care homes, 98 in hospital and nine at home or other non-institutional locations.

The report provided updates from Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. The Police Scotland service update highlighted a falling number of warnings and associated enforcement activity associated with compliance with social distancing and coronavirus legislation. Similarly, the movement into Phase 3 and the compulsory use of face masks had resulted in minimal complaints to the police. The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) continued to deliver all statutory obligations throughout Renfrewshire whilst following both organisational and Government guidance in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. The report provided an overview of Police Scotland and SFRS activities since their last updates and indicated the beginning of a return to more normal patterns of working as the lockdown measures were eased. M Hill (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service) updated Elected Members on the impact of COVID-19 on SFRS resources and resilience; the work of the Service's Community Action Teams; and recent operational activity. D Lang (Police Scotland) provided an update on the effects of the easing of lockdown upon operational activities, including visits to licensed premises and the wearing of facemasks.

The report set out the results of a recent Business Survey which revealed that 92% of Renfrewshire business had been closed or operating at only partial capacity and that 44% had been completely closed throughout lockdown; that 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; and that 40% of businesses believed that redundancies may be likely over the next three months. A number of business support measures, specifically directed to assisting businesses cope with the unique pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic were presented for the Board's approval. 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. In order to respond flexibly and quickly to such developments, the report sought delegated authority to appropriately adjust resources across each of the individual measures in response to changes in demand. Details of any such adjustments that were actioned would be provided in subsequent update reports to this Board. There would be no change to the overall level of funding proposed in the report without subsequent Board approval.

The Scottish Government was due to respond to the recommendations of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) report 'Towards a robust, resilient wellbeing economy for Scotland' by the end of July and an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Emergencies Board following their response. The report anticipated that the Council would wish to consider its proposed economic recovery plan in light of the Scottish Government's response. The AGER recommendations included 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.

The Head of Regeneration provided an update to this section of the report, highlighting £100 million of additional Government funding for new employment support and training packages.

The report referred to the Scottish Government's announcement on 23 June 2020 that schools would reopen for all children and young people on a full-time basis from 11 August 2020, conditional on ongoing scientific and health advice. A final decision would 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 plan had been submitted to Education Scotland for scrutiny as previously noted. A copy of the Education Scotland response was attached to the report as Appendix 2. The response highlighted a number of key strengths and provided assurance that the approach being taken would effectively support the return to face to face learning and teaching for children and young people.

The Director of Children's Services advised members of further Scottish Government guidance on the reopening of schools which removed the need for social distancing for students both in school and on dedicated school transport.

The report provided an update on the Council's services including community learning and development, including Street Stuff; support for businesses; the operation of the Renfrewshire Community Safety Hub; sheltered housing; the re-opening of non-essential office accommodation; the cancellation of the winter 2020 events programme, including the Paisley Fireworks and Paisley Lights switch-on events; progress on the creation of temporary cycle lanes utilising Spaces for People Funding; the limited re-opening of the library service; and the operation of the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Members heard from the Director of Finance and Resources in relation to the Council's cycle to work scheme; from the Director of Environment and Infrastructure in relation to the grass cutting programme and the creation of the temporary cycle lanes; from the Head of Regeneration in relation to the level of support afforded to Renfrewshire businesses under the UK Government's furlough scheme and other funding issues; from the Head of Communities & Public Protection in relation to the operation of the Street Stuff programme of activities and the resumption of non-essential repairs and letting service for Council housing; from the Head of Policy and Commissioning in relation to the resumption of Local Partnership meetings; and from the Chief Executive, Renfrewshire

Leisure relative to any future re-opening of community centres.

DECIDED:

(a) That the current national and local situation with regard to COVID-19 and the impact on communities, businesses, the Council and its partners be noted;

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

(c) That the programme of business support measures detailed in paragraphs 5.32 to 5.44 of the report and their allocated budgets be agreed; and

(d) That, in line with the details outlined in paragraph 5.29 of the report, authority be delegated to the Head of Regeneration, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources, to appropriately adjust resources between each of the individual Business Support Measures according to demand as required, with subsequent update reports to Members.

3 Items for Decision by the Board

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

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

It was noted that there were no confidential updates.