



## Briefing note for Elected Members

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From:	Steve Grimmond, Chief Executive
To:	All councillors, Fife MPs, Fife MSPs
Cc:	Council Executive Team; Council Leadership Team
Subject:	Coronavirus (Covid-19) response
Date:	25 June 2020
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This briefing note is to update members on action being taken by Fife Council in response to the coronavirus (Covid-19). It provides an update for members from the last briefing note and is accurate at time of writing. However, the situation changes quickly, and sometimes different decisions are made before things are confirmed publicly so details of this **note should not be shared with the media or members of the public.**

Please only share public notices and social media posts and point people to [www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus](http://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus) or [www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus) wherever possible.

### Transition to new ways of working

- Directorates continue to develop the detail of their recovery plans as national guidance emerges and is refined – [our high-level route map is available at www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus) and this will be updated as we move into subsequent phases of recovery
- The multi-agency Fife Local Resilience Partnership will now meet monthly although sub groups continue to work on recovery issues
- Incident Management Teams are now meeting **fortnightly** and we're managing recovery and comms plans on this cycle. **In line with that, we'll now issue these overarching member briefings every two weeks**, supplemented by more specific service briefings as required.

### Workforce Update

- We have 8,175 recorded instances of **public health absence/COVID-19** related leave and 7,086 of these are recorded as working from home. There are currently 15 employees positively diagnosed with coronavirus (7 of which are working from home). These figures exclude Trusts.
- To date 24 business-critical employees/family members have booked tests through our **prioritised testing**.

- We're issuing staff guidance about what information they can provide about people they've been in contact with through work, if asked as part of Test & Protect scheme
- There have been no requests for volunteer support from the independent care come sector.
- Team Fife volunteers have been contacted and asked to confirm their ongoing availability by 26 June. There continues to be around 400 people available to be redeployed if required and we will provide an updated figure next week.
- Health & Safety recovery guidance document, including risk assessments
- Counselling service referrals half of normal figures, but May saw first Covid-related referrals – consistent with models of trauma/wellbeing

### **Health & Social Care Partnership**

- Care homes – all elected members, Fife Integration Joint Board members, NHS Fife Board members and local MPs/MSPs received a briefing last week on care homes and the support in place. The Care Home Oversight Group continues to meet to support this work as a priority.
- Shielding work and visits are almost complete. Feedback from the Scottish Government highlighted the high level of satisfaction from Fife residents on the shielding support received.
- The Partnership is working with partners on the re-mobilisation of services to ensure there is a 'whole system approach' to re-starting services when it is safe to do so. Services across the Partnership are reviewing feedback and exploring options.
- Pharmacies:
  - our pharmacies remain extremely busy and managing queues can be a challenge. A press release has been issued to remind the public to be patient and kind.
  - the new NHS Pharmacy First service starts from 29 July 2020 – this is the re-designed minor ailment and common clinical conditions service. [More information is available on the Community Pharmacy Scotland website.](#)
  - every GP practice in Fife now has access to a pharmacist independent prescriber to support GP practices.

### **Education & Children's Services**

- A separate briefing has been issued to elected members on the impact of this week's announcement in Parliament about a full return to schools in August.
- Staff and parents/pupils will be updated as we monitor and implement new guidance.
- Extensive work will be required over summer period to carry out further risk assessments.

### **Community support**

- Care for People group is looking at lessons learned so far to feed into recovery and longer-term plans to support vulnerable Fifers.
- Starting to see some response from our direct mailing to vulnerable people's database – monitoring this.
- Very low volume of support requests on the back of test and protect, so there's no requirement to activate contingency plans for isolated accommodation etc.
- Housing services are preparing for increased homelessness demand and temporary accommodation is under pressure again.
- We're working with Trusts to consider joint timetabling and service delivery in our community facilities.

## Bereavement and registration

- Registration is moving from 7 to 6-days a week service
- **Birth registrations** will start on 29 June with bulk of process being handled remotely and a final signature required in person.
- We've started to process marriage and civil partnership requests that had been received previously and are preparing to conduct small ceremonies in line with guidance.
- Arrangements for registration of deaths and limited access to funerals continues.

## Service disruptions and updates

- More staff are returning to carry our road inspections, dredging etc
- We're gearing up for construction to start again, prioritising projects funded by **City Deal**
- **Playparks** and some outdoor leisure facilities will start to open next week and we're installing appropriate signage – members will receive a separate briefing note with more detail about this
- **Housing repair** phone lines are back open

## Infrastructure & logistics

- The Building Value Board is now coordinating plans around the preparation of our estate for a wider return to work places, complemented by home working
- We'd like to acknowledge the huge efforts made by staff in facilities management, property and cleaning teams particularly, to prepare schools for transition activities.
- Physical distancing measures are in place in key buildings and schools and an approach is being developed to roll out to the rest of our buildings across Fife. We're continuing to monitor physical distancing and other national guidelines and will adapt plans as required.
- Procurement teams are working with services to resource recovery plans around property, transport, PPE etc

## Finance

- Following reports to the Policy & Coordination Committee we're working on minimising spend and keeping service's Covid-related costs within existing budgets wherever possible.
- Council tax and rent recovery operations will be restarting – this will be handled sensitively to ensure those who cannot afford to pay are aware of relevant support.

## Environmental Health & Trading Standards

- Work continues with all partners to monitor, implement and enforce regulations as well as carrying out contact tracing, which is being led by NHS Fife.
- If members have **any enquiries** relating to the Covid Public Health Regulations, or concerns about businesses, please contact [Covid19.Enforcement@fife.gov.uk](mailto:Covid19.Enforcement@fife.gov.uk)

## Business & tourism

- The operational **Town Centre Restart Group** is meeting weekly and preparing for non-essential retail start on 29 June. Survey for businesses is open to 6 July.
- Feedback from the survey will help shape bids to the Government's £2m **town centre resilience fund**. We'll submit a bid to help fund things like street furniture and signage – multi-agency subgroup is focusing on this work.
- We're working with the town centre action group, Trusts and tourism partners to plan coordinated opening of **public toilets** in line with Scottish Government guidance.

- We're also engaging with partners on the Scottish Enterprise-led **economic recovery scenario planning** for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region.
- We've held a workshop with members of the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning & Transportation Committee on regional growth and recovery - and a discussion paper on economic challenges and recovery will be taken to the Member Stakeholder Group
- The **business support fund** (all phases) and the **hardship relief fund for the self-employed** will **close to new applications on 10 July**
- To date, over 5,050 businesses have applied to the business support fund, with 4,550 applications approved, representing a total awards value of over £51m.
- Details of all schemes available to different types of businesses are published at [www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus)

## Communications

- Promotions this week include:
  - Arrangements for schools and childcare
  - Registration services
  - Free school meals and school clothing entitlements
  - Housing repairs
  - Recycling centres updates and reminders
  - Town centre survey
  - Business grants
  - New bin lorry adverts to promote Test & Protect
- **Staff information** is still being distributed through a range of channels, including the employee app, the intranet and email.
- We continue to **share NHS, Government and partner content** across the council web and social channels internally and externally.

## NHS Fife information for elected members

Weekly updates from NHS Fife are available at <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/briefings-for-fife-elected-members-msps-mps-and-councillors/>

## Reference information

- See [www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.fife.gov.uk/coronavirus) for the latest council updates and links national advice and support. Note – these website pages also include a feed from our main Facebook and Twitter accounts if you don't use these channels but are interested in seeing the updates.
- NHS Fife's information website, <https://coronavirus.nhsfife.org/> continues to update on local services and hospitals as well as signposting to national advice
- Health Protection Scotland Guidance includes:
  - [Guidance for non-healthcare settings](#)
  - [Guidance for social or community care and residential settings](#)
  - [Guidance on social distancing for protecting older people and vulnerable adults](#)
- Ready Scotland Information
- NHS Inform website for general health advice and public guidance

- Free helpline for those who do not have symptoms but are looking for general health advice  
Tel: 0800 028 2816.
- Helpline for small businesses, Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm. Tel: 0300 303 0660.
- Covid community helpline: 0800 952 0330