

Agenda



Requisitioned Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council

Date: Thursday, 24 September 2020

Time: 10:00

Format: Zoom Video Conference

Contact: Christine McCaffary
Email: christine.mccaffary@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Dear Member

Please attend a requisitioned meeting of **West Dunbartonshire Council** as detailed above. The business is shown on the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

JOYCE WHITE

Chief Executive

Distribution:-

Provost William Hendrie
Bailie Denis Agnew
Councillor Jim Bollan
Councillor Jim Brown
Councillor Gail Casey
Councillor Karen Conaghan
Councillor Ian Dickson
Councillor Diane Docherty
Councillor Jim Finn
Councillor Daniel Lennie
Councillor Caroline McAllister

Councillor Douglas McAllister
Councillor David McBride
Councillor Jonathan McColl
Councillor Iain McLaren
Councillor Marie McNair
Councillor John Millar
Councillor John Mooney
Councillor Lawrence O'Neill
Councillor Sally Page
Councillor Martin Rooney
Councillor Brian Walker

Chief Executive

Strategic Director - Transformation & Public Service Reform

Strategic Director - Regeneration, Environment & Growth

Chief Officer - West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership

Date of issue: 18 September 2020

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WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2020

AGENDA

1 STATEMENT BY CHAIR – AUDIO STREAMING

The Chair will be heard in connection with the above.

2 APOLOGIES

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare if they have an interest in the item of business on this agenda and the reasons for any such declaration.

4 RECORDING OF VOTES

The Council is asked to agree that all votes taken during the meeting will be done by roll call vote to ensure an accurate record.

5 COVID-19 CASES ACROSS THE WEST OF SCOTLAND

In terms of Standing Order No.3(b) Councillors Martin Rooney, John Millar, David McBride, Douglas McAllister, Lawrence O'Neill, John Mooney, Gail Casey and Daniel Lennie have submitted the following:-

We the undersigned Councillors request a Special Meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council to discuss the following:-

This Council notes the significant increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases across the West of Scotland.

As a result additional restrictions have been introduced for people living in:

Glasgow City,
East Renfrewshire,
Renfrewshire,
East Dunbartonshire and
West Dunbartonshire.

Our community is alarmed that the West Dunbartonshire Council area currently has the highest infection rate in Scotland and the fourth highest infection rates in the UK.

We call on the Chief Executive to bring forward a report to a requisitioned Council meeting, setting out the Council responses, and those of the HSCP & NHS GGC, and to outline what additional steps are being taken to assist communities to reduce the infection.

In addition to advise what steps are being taken to increase the testing capacity from the current part time to a full time level to assist residents to get tested when required, particularly those without their own transport to get tested locally.

Councillors

Martin Rooney
John Millar
David McBride
Douglas McAllister
Lawrence O'Neill
John Mooney
Gail Casey
Daniel Lennie

6 COVID-19 UPDATE

5 – 20

Submit report by the Chief Executive providing an update in relation to COVID-19 in West Dunbartonshire since the previous update report to Council in August 2020.

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Executive****Requisition Council: 24 September 2020**

Subject: COVID-19 Update**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To provide Members with an update in relation to COVID-19 in West Dunbartonshire since the previous update report to Council in August 2020.
- 1.2** To provide Members with up-to-date information on the additional support and advice that the council is providing to communities and businesses across West Dunbartonshire to help alleviate the impact of COVID-19.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** Members are asked to:
 - (a) Note the information provided on COVID-19 in West Dunbartonshire since the update provided to the August 2020 Council; and
 - (b) Note the information provided in relation to the additional support and advice that the council is providing to communities and businesses across West Dunbartonshire to help alleviate the impact of COVID-19.

3. Background

- 3.1** The COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the lockdown of society and services represents an unprecedented challenge for delivery of council services. Since the August 2020 report Scotland has remained at Phase 3 of the Scottish Government (SG) COVID-19 route map. Services have continued to return, often in different or reduced ways as the impact of COVID-19 continues to be managed in line with the route map and SG guidance. It is evident that there will be material financial implications for the council.
- 3.2** In recent weeks we have seen an increase in the prevalence of COVID-19 infection in the area and on 1 September 2020 the SG instigated local prohibitions on how people in the area interact with each other.
- 3.3** This report was originally planned to be provided to the ordinary Council meeting on 30 September 2020, however has been brought-forward to the requisitioned meeting to provide Members with updated information to aid discussion on the issues raised in the requisition notice.

4. Main Issues

4.1 Changes to Governance Arrangements

Normal governance and committee meetings have recommenced following lockdown and summer recess. Regular Elected Member briefings continue to be reported to all 22 Elected Members.

4.2 Key Current Live Issues

4.2.1 Finance and Resourcing

The restrictions imposed on businesses, including the Council, by the SG arising from the pandemic has resulted in a significant operational and financial impact. The absolute financial impact is not currently clear in totality as recovery processes and approaches develop and how the stages of the SG COVID-19 route map will actually affect Council services and finances is not clear as yet. This report provides an update on financial implications since the August 2020 report.

4.2.2 Regulatory Services

In terms of managing the virus officers from regulatory have committed significant resources in advising businesses on compliance with changing guidance and legislation. Press releases and regularly updated guidance on the website have encouraged compliance as well as responses to direct requests for assistance and complaints. In the period to 16 September 323 visits were made to the 142 on-sale licensed premises both during the day and in the evening. These visits continue and address issues with premises as they arise. A programme of engagement and on-site assessments with businesses in the non-licensed hospitality sector including cafes, fast food chains and supermarket cafeterias has been undertaken and will continue during restrictions. Many premises that have a cafeteria supplementary to their main business remain closed. Officers have visited premises whilst trading, observed controls in practice and discussed concerns and dealt with enquiries from business managers. Visits to non-licensed hospitality premises (cafes, unlicensed restaurants, fast food chains) have been increased following the tightening of local restrictions and, in the period from 1st to 16 September, 89 visits were made to these premises to advise on social distancing measures and verify compliance with legislation and guidance. Compliance with Legislation and guidance across local businesses has been extremely high and where issues have been identified businesses have been co-operating with the Council to address those issues.

4.2.3 Education

The reopening of schools and Early Learning Centres was a success through careful planning, cross service working, risk assessment of COVID-19 risks and establishment of mitigation measures to prevent the spread of infection within Educational establishments. A protocol for responding to cases of COVID-19 in Educational establishments was developed in partnership with Environmental Health and communicated across the Education service. The protocol was recently streamlined with agreement from NHS Public Health to

an approach where Environmental Health leads with all COVID-19 case assessments in conjunction with Education to identify close contacts for self-isolation. This protective measure limits the risk of onward transmission of COVID-19 in Education settings.

As COVID-19 cases have risen in the community at large, there have been some cases that have presented in Education settings, resulting in case assessments with employees and pupils having to self-isolate. From the time of introduction of the streamlined procedure for case assessments there had been 11 recorded cases in Education settings and approximately 100 individuals (pupils and staff) identified as close contacts who had to self-isolate. The Campus@wdc is open to all pupils who are self isolating. Class teachers also share course work via Google classroom.

There is an Environmental Health resource demand in providing for case assessment and a significant Education resource impact in those affected establishments in terms of responding to the assessment, contacting parents / guardians and issuing letters explaining the self-isolation requirements.

4.2.4 Corporate Communications

Corporate Communications has had a key role to play the response to the rising levels of COVID-19 in West Dunbartonshire by disseminating the messaging on the local restrictions announced by the SG on 1 September, 2020.

The team has worked with partners including colleagues in the SG, other local authorities, NHS GGC and Police Scotland to develop materials and amplify key messages. In addition a range of bespoke communications has been developed tailored to West Dunbartonshire. This has included two administrator messages from the Chief Executive to all employees, media releases highlighting and thereafter reminding of lockdown restrictions, and a media release promoting the new six person rule for outdoor meetings and hospitality settings.

This activity has been further supported through social media messaging and imagery as well as promotion through the Council website, intranet and Housing News. Currently the Council has a social media audience of 36,700 and this continues to be the most effective channel for issuing information. In addition, key information including recent media releases have been issued by the communities team to partners and groups to widen awareness among harder to reach residents, including those who may not be digitally connected.

4.2.5 Housing and Employability

Significant focus has been placed on communicating with our service users and communities about appropriate and safe behaviours to limit the spread of COVID-19. Our Housing and Homelessness services are increasing signage in common spaces within our properties and sharing practical information with tenants, tenant groups and other landlords/support providers. The Communities Team is sharing new Council public information through its network of community organisations. Working4U is cascading information through all its networks including the Youth Alliance.

All services are operating effectively, primarily based on remote working arrangements, with limited essential client services preparing to work from specified office space when this is possible. Services are adapting to increased demand, for example in our homelessness service. In addition, new ways to deliver services are being developed demonstrated through the virtual hubs set up by Working4U to provide a wide range of employability, learning and financial advice services. The team incorporated a method for securing electronic signatures for people using the W4U money service. This overcomes the need to acquire 'wet' signatures and therefore reducing direct contact while meeting official guidelines for completing official documentation. The Communities Team has developed a Virtual Community Centre for groups and organisations. A space where they can hold their meetings and keep in contact with their members/community. These approaches support public health efforts to minimise face to face contact and reduce opportunities for infection.

The Crisis Support Team and Volunteer Management team has continued to offer a significantly reduced service following the end of the lockdown phase. Current demand for support is low and the team has supported 28 households through the Test and Protect initiative.

Crisis and Volunteer support	Numbers at
	14/09/2020
Total Referrals	2,337
Repeat referrals	637
Total Number of Individuals supported	1,808
Shielded residents	1,161
Test and Protect	28
Follow up calls made	3,221
Current active case load (ongoing support from crisis team)	85
Practical support (Volunteer management team)	767
Food Insecurity	
Emergency Food referrals (foodbank)	762
Referred and supported by 'Able to Pay Service'	144
SG care box submissions	545
SG supermarket support submissions	191

4.2.6 Spaces For People

The Council was successful in receiving a funding award from Sustrans in the region of £0.440m to deliver social distancing measures within town centres, schools and commuting routes. The measures are commencing within town centre locations to increase the available footway width and encourage residents to visit town centre businesses and amenities. The Roads Service and internal colleagues have identified a series of measures to be implemented to comply with social distancing guidance. Water filled barriers have been placed in key locations and advisory signage will be installed to act as a visual reminder to town centre visitors to continue to follow the 2m social distancing guidance. The measures will be monitored and amended as required. Loading bays and disabled parking bays will be retained. This is the first phase of the implementation and consultation will be undertaken in relation to installing place making measures such as parklets and planters.

In addition there have been a number of measures implemented in the vicinity of schools and further measures will be implemented when identified.

4.2.7 Community Listening Event

Council hosted a community listening event on Tuesday 8 September on behalf of the SG Social Renewal Board. The event held online, was focused on gathering the views and experiences of those community members who have been at the front line of the local response to COVID-19. The Social Renewal Board brings together a range of agencies and services to collaboratively explore actions to reduce poverty and inequality in local communities. The listening event model, being delivered in a number of Local Authorities is a means to gather 'real time' feedback from our local community responders about the impact of COVID-19 in local areas.

The local listening event involved 12 community representatives who have worked to support our most vulnerable citizens during this time. Participants represented West Dunbartonshire wide and local community based services such as, food banks, carers organisations, equality and access groups and groups focused on reducing isolation/supporting individuals in crisis. Over 90 minutes the participants shared their views on how COVID-19 has changed life in the community, what worked, and didn't work, in terms of response and what they feel would make life better going forward. While some challenges were outlined such as too much information and not knowing where to go for clarity, the stories were overwhelmingly positive and inspiring. The participants talked of increased community spirit, getting to know neighbours and working to find solutions for anyone who needed them. They also gave helpful and practical tips for going forward, such as, how to get information out to those who are digitally excluded. These lessons, and the strong partnership between community response and services, will support recovery planning and wider community empowerment aspirations going forward.

4.2.8 Asset Management

Compliance checks to continue in operational buildings being used including fire alarm systems and legionella checks. All required works being carried out via specialist contractors to ensure building re-openings are safe to do so and minimise any risk of further infection from within our establishments. Continue

to implement Property Recovery plans for offices, assisted Education with Schools reopening and work with HR&OD following workforce styles return to establish which offices are required to open for immediate returners.

The vast majority of Housing and General Services capital projects are back on site with COVID-19 site management plans requiring to be approved prior to re-starting non essential construction works. Plans being approved via Corporate H&S. Risk Assessments approved by unions for employees accessing sites and operational buildings where required.

4.2.9 Housing Capital Investment

As lockdown stopped all Housing Capital work programmes, the team managed all communications to tenants involved in programmes to advise of the situation and maintain email contact links. Managed the pause of all active programmes and worked with our contractors to ensure all sites/work were left safe. Thereafter continued to update all investment and housing databases to assist with year end returns and prepared for the restart of work.

In line with SG restart plan for construction, the team managed the programme restarts and communication with tenants on external programmes first, gradually increasing to additional programmes in line with SG route map. The majority of programmes are now progressing in accordance with COVID-19 management procedures.

4.2.10 Building Services

In line with the SG route map and the Construction Scotland Re-start Model 6 Stage Plan has allowed construction activity to restart on a phased basis. All employees, available for work, were back at the end of August 2020. Operatives have been kept up to date on appropriate social distancing practices particularly when working inside a tenant's home. Whilst the regulations allow for Building Services to be back at work, the necessary health and safety restrictions will have an affect on the productivity and activity of the workforce.

Building Services have continued to provide essential services throughout the lockdown including 4,000 emergency repairs within Council housing and the commercial and public building assets. Building Services also worked on and have returned 120 void properties back to housing to build resilience in the Councils' homeless support accommodation portfolio.

4.2.11 Economic Development

The focus for the Business Support service is to progress with the Business Gateway programme and engage and support the business community in the recovery phase from the Pandemic. Together with the Chamber of Commerce the service is supporting a Scottish wide 'Love Local' campaign with local retailers to stimulate our Town Centres as they commence the recovery process.

HSCP Services

4.2.12 Residential Care Homes

Care Homes have very much been at the centre of the pandemic and of the HSCP response, supporting the most vulnerable in our population in terms of the impact of the virus.

Assurance around quality of care, infection control practices, staffing and the use of PPE across all care homes continues through the daily oversight/huddle meetings.

The weekly multi-disciplinary oversight group including Public Health and the Care Inspectorate continues to meet and as at 15th September, all care homes within West Dunbartonshire had an overall RAG rating of green, indicating no significant concerns.

Testing remains a major area of focus for care homes and processes have been refined as required reflecting all current guidance. Initially testing was of employees or family members of employees who were symptomatic. This was later expanded to test all residents (where consent was provided) and employees when an outbreak was suspected.

Care home visiting remains in garden areas only, in line with current restrictions, except in occasional exceptional circumstances.

4.2.13 PPE

The current restrictions introduced by the SG on 1 September 2020 have had no impact on the supply and distribution of PPE and we will continue to monitor this situation in line with the next review date which will be on 22 September 2020.

4.2.14 Children and Families

Arrangements in respect of the provision of direct contact between looked after children and their parents / carers remains a significant area of challenge due to the high number of statutory orders naming specific contact arrangements and capacity locally to provide this safely. As such employees are working hard to ensure families receive a blend of face to face and remote contact, with some outdoor contact also facilitated. This also mirrors the national experience, and is supported by local guidance in respect of the provision of statutory contact arrangements within the current context.

4.2.15 COVID-19 Testing – Care Homes, Council employees and Wider Community

- **Mobile Testing Unit**

As the incidence of positive cases in West Dunbartonshire increased action was taken to ensure local access to testing provision. From 3rd September, a Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) was located at the Meadow's Leisure Centre in Dumbarton and relocated to Church Street from Tuesday 15 September. The MTU can accommodate up to 400 tests a day and operates alternate days, including weekends (it is located at

Port Glasgow on the other days) and is opened between 10am and 5pm. The unit is staffed by Scottish Ambulance Service personnel and operates as a drive through facility. Appointments need to be made through NHS Inform. As at today's date, on no date has demand exceeded the capacity of the mobile testing unit.

Both the Council and NHSGGC continue to work together to publicise access to local testing.

- Local Testing Site
The HSCP's Chief Officer was contacted on 10th September by the SG Resilience Division to assist with identifying a potential location for a Local Testing Site (LTS). This differs from a MTU in that it will be located in a building in West Dunbartonshire, and will offer a testing facility, closer to deprived communities, and for people travelling on foot. The unit will be managed by Deloittes and will operate into the medium term potentially up to six months. A shortlist of potential sites has been drawn up, these are now being assessed against the criteria provided by SG and site visits are planned over 16th and 17th September.
- COVID-19 Care Home Testing for Residents & Employees
Testing in all care homes has been successfully implemented within West Dunbartonshire, with over 8,000 employee tests completed and over 1,300 resident tests completed, the vast majority of results negative. In recent weeks, care homes have reported some delays in the processing of results. Concerns have been escalated within NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde who are developing proposals to minimise delays going forward.
- Testing for Council Employees and the Wider Community
COVID-19 'drive through' centres have been positioned throughout Glasgow where employees and members of the public can go to be tested. The Council are continuing to publicise and promote testing with 39 employees referred for testing from the wider workforce and 84 tested in the home care teams.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** Progress continues in a number of areas that impact the workforce, ensuring that services are able to effectively implement their recovery and renewal plans. The national messages from the Scottish Government are reinforced by way of the local workforce updates to ensure that appropriate guidance and local measures are in place to keep the workforce and residents of West Dunbartonshire safe.
- 5.2** Testing through the Employer Referral scheme continues, particularly for asymptomatic key workers. The process for this scheme is now well established and able to respond should there be an increase in demand in the coming weeks and months. Weekly care home employee testing has been in place locally since its introduction nationally with good rates of compliance and with an average of 170 employees tested each week.

All employees who provide direct care are tested if and when they report symptoms or if contacted through Test and Protect. . Since this service was introduced in May 2020 39 employees have been referred by managers. The number of referrals has increased with 9 referrals made in September to date. This may be attributed to employees returning to work as recovery plan is implemented. The importance of adhering to PPE and enhanced hygiene guidance has been widely communicated to all employees via the usual media.

- 5.3** Further improvements have been made to the digital technologies available to ensure that widespread remote working continues smoothly as well as developing the skills needed to effectively use these tools with a rapid deployment and support programme for MS Teams and the use of Zoom. This has allowed online interactions and processes to be continuously improved. This is supported by the agreed mobile working guidance and HR information sessions which address all relevant aspects of working from home and remote working ensuring employees and manager are appropriately supported.

There has been a dramatic increase in the usage of the i-learn platform, peaking at 1800 accesses in some weeks. Popular courses tend to be those that are on Skills Passports. In the recent Digital Skills Survey, e-learning was the most popular method of learning.

- 5.4** The outputs of the recent working style assessments enabled a plan to be implemented allowing selected groups of employees to return to some offices safely during September (this is subject to alteration dependent on local restrictions). A return to work support pack for both employee and manager has been developed recognising that many are anxious about the return to a workplace. Those able to remain working at home have had a further assessment intervention to ensure that they can do so comfortably and safely.

- 5.5** The focus on employee health and wellbeing is critical and a wide range of additional supports are available for employees, particularly in relation to their mental health. This includes information packs for employees and managers, webinars and awareness raising of external resources. This is all in addition to the existing internal supports and resources available.

- 5.6** Absence levels have continued to fall during July and August with reductions of 30% and 18% respectively reported. This equates to a decrease of 1944.07 full time equivalent (FTE) days lost compared to the July and August 2019. This can partly be attributed to:

- Decrease of 87.7 working days lost attributed to work related stress compared to July and August 2019.
- Decrease of 506.5 working days lost attributed to minor illness compared to July and August 2019.

The current flexible and home working arrangements in place may be a contributing factor to the significant decrease in absences attributed to

minor illness. Given home working will continue for many employees, this may lessen the volume of absences related to minor illness that are typically seen in the autumn months.

Personal stress continues to feature in the top 3 reasons for absence and to support employees who may be experiencing difficulties, virtual sessions of the Access to Work (Mental Health Support) have been taking place. This has been complemented by the delivery of a webinar focussed on managing mental health during difficult times and the continued promotion of the employee supports available.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

The lockdown has had, and continues to have, implications in terms of service delivery and in relation to the Council's planned budget for 2020/21 as a result of additional spend requirements, lost income offset by some cost savings due to services reducing/stopping. The SG has provided additional funding to support Councils. Total net cost implications of COVID-19 on the General Fund will not be clear for some time as the Council moves through the phases of easing of lockdown often won't be clear until they happen.

6.2 Since the imposition of lockdown the SG has implemented a number of approaches to mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on citizens of Scotland, businesses, charities and Councils. The majority of the funding that the SG has distributed for various purposes has been derived from Barnett consequential from UK Government funding provisions, though some will have come from re-prioritised SG funds.

6.3 The COVID-19 Update report to August 2020 Council reported that £5.582m of funding had been allocated to WDC to provide financial support, including funding for provision of support to the community for food provision, additional Social Welfare Fund payments, additional Discretionary Housing Payments and additional Council Tax Reduction payments (the latter has not yet been allocated).

6.4 The August 2020 report advised of a Barnett Consequential of £49m which had yet to be allocated. At COSLA Leaders meeting on 28 August 2020 agreed that this funding should be allocated to Councils in the same proportion as previous general non-earmarked COVID-19 funding was distributed. Based on this then WDC should receive a further £0.862m in 2020/21

6.5 The August 2020 report also advised of additional funding to support Education Recovery, as follows:

- £50m for additional teachers and support employees already allocated (£0.992m to WDC (£0.661m 2020/21 and £0.331m in 21/22));
- £30m for further Additional Teachers – WDC share £0.595m (£0.397m 2020/21 and £0.198m 21/22);
- £20m for school infrastructure costs – WDC share £0.326m; and

- £30m remaining funding for infrastructure costs which is being held in reserve by SG depending on need.
- 6.6** In relation to additional costs being incurred by HSCP, as at the August 2020 Council report the SG has advised that such costs will be funded and had allocated £75m to support social care costs of which the WDC share was £1.347m. Since the August 2020 report the SG has allocated a further £1.300m to WDC for social care costs, giving a total of £2.647m. The HSCP has recently updated annual cost projections for the impact of COVID-19 at £4.567m, though clearly these costs projections will continue to be revised as we progress through the remainder of the year, particularly as we see infection rates and other illnesses over the next few months.
- 6.7** The August 2020 report advised that COSLA was in discussion with SG regarding the provision of financial flexibilities to Councils. These discussions have continued and SG has since written to the UK Government around the potential for such flexibilities to be provided to Councils over 2020/21 and 2021/22.
- 6.8** As reported to the August 2020 Council there will be further a Barnett Consequential arising from the Loss of Income support scheme which the UK Government is implementing in England. The value of this and the methodology for distribution are not known, though the scheme is likely to be different in Scotland as a significant element of lost income is being experienced through ALEOs – which is quite different to the position in England. COSLA Leaders agreed at their meeting on 28 August that the Scottish Scheme should include ALEOs.
- 6.9** Since the August 2020 report the SG has announced additional capital funding to support Place-Based regeneration of £30m. Full details of this funding and approach to distribution are awaited.
- 6.10** Total net cost implications of COVID-19 on the General Fund will not be clear for some time with financial implications as the Council moves through the phases of easing of lockdown often won't be clear until they happen. Budgetary Control reports to Council and Committees will provide up-to-date financial projections of the Council's financial performance, including the net projected impact of COVID-19 with the next report being finalized for the Council meeting on 30 September 2020.
- 6.11** It is highly likely that there will be a net financial impact to the Council from COVID-19 as described above (or higher) with potential for additional bad debt provision and clearly it will be important that further funding is secured from Government and/or appropriate financial flexibilities are provided to Councils to mitigate the impact into 2021/22.
- 6.12 Procurement Implications**
There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** In accordance with the Council's Risk Management Framework, a Strategic Risk has been developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This, along with the organisation-wide, operational risks sitting beneath, will be reported in the bi-annual risk updates to Corporate Services and Audit Committees. The first draft of the risk is appended to this report.
- 7.2** The most significant risk remains the financial impact of COVID-19 on the Council and the potential shortfall in funding support from the SG. COSLA has continued to engage with the SG to evidencing the financial impacts on Councils and the need for further financial support or financial flexibilities, some of which will be also required to be advised to the UK Government. The outcome of this will be important in terms of the future financial position of the Council.
- 7.3** There remain risks, as described above, around how the UK exits the European Union. The current budget assumptions are based on the UK budget announced in the autumn of 2018 which stated that in the event of a "no deal", or a deal less favourable than hoped for, it was likely that the UK Government would require to reset the country's finances. Such a move or any other impact of Brexit could have a significant impact on the Council and its financial position for 2020/21 and subsequent years.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1** No equalities impact assessment was required in relation to this report.

9. Consultation

- 9.1** Discussions on the issues herein have been had with the Trades Unions on an ongoing and regular basis and a copy of this report provided in advance of the publication.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** All actions and plans around COVID-19 have been done in order to continue to achieve the Council's strategic objectives.
- 10.2** Sound financial control and good governance remains a key approach in minimising the risk to the Council and the ongoing capacity of the Council to continue to deliver its strategic objectives in the longer term.

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Joyce White
Chief Executive

Date: 17 September 2020

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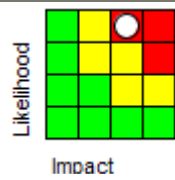
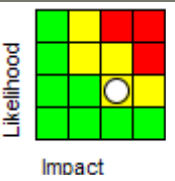
Appendix: Strategic Risk Pandemic Situations – COVID-19





Background Papers: 1. Member Briefings and FAQs on COVID-19 issues;
2. Budget Report – Council, 4 March 2020;
3. Minute of Council meeting – 4 March 2020;
4. COVID-19 Update Report – Council 24 June 2020;
and
5. COVID-19 Update Report – Council 26 August 2020.

Wards Affected: All






Appendix: Strategic Risk Report Pandemic Situations (COVID-19)

Generated on: 14 September 202

SR 012					
	SR 012 COVID – Significant Service and Workforce Disruption		Current Risk Matrix		Last Review Date
Description	<p>The Council is faced with significant ongoing demands with disruption to service delivery, increasing PPE and workforce pressures as a result of Covid 19 and subsequent local and national outbreaks.</p> <p>This involves both responding to the crisis and from services returning to a new normality based on Response, Recovery and Renew guidance produced by Scottish and National Government.</p> <p>NB. Financial risk is also reflected in SR001</p>			12	
Potential Effect	<p>Reduced service delivery, disruption to service provision, demand for increased workforce in many areas, increased financial pressures and difficulty in responding effectively to demands from employees, Trade Unions and the wider public.</p>			6	
Measures of Impact	<p>Reduction in government funding Reduction in revenue and income Service reductions or closures/reducing quality/limiting quantity Reduction in WDC/WDLT workforce Increased debt owed to the Council Reputational damage to WDLT and Council due to reduced delivery/quality of services</p>		Latest Note	<p>First draft of high level strategic risk covering pandemic situation – COVID -19 September 2020.</p> <p>Further additional detail to be added and refined by service managers responding and delivering the recovery model.</p>	
Risk Factors	<p>Level of government funding for COVID 19 Second wave of COVID-19 Local outbreaks, non compliance resulting in further restrictions or local lockdown Workforce reduction/absence/recruitment difficulties/wellbeing impacted/additional PPE requirements/difficulty with supply chain/increased costs Concerns from Elected Members/employees/Trade Unions about provision/ safety of service/facilities Additional hardware/software to cope with prolonged remote working Significant additional burden in Capital receipts</p>				
Internal Controls	<p>10 year Financial Strategy as referred within SR001 Powers delegated to council officers to speed up critical decision making during pandemic Business continuity plans – organisational and service specific SRG/SRRG established as a key decision making body guided by strategic council aims. Decisions noted and reported periodically to full Council. Regular sharing of information and guidance to officers and managers in relation to COVID-19 via exception reporting and situation (SITREP) reporting to ORG/SRG ORG established as an operational delivery body to ensure consistent messages and SRG decisions implemented, governance and compliance managed via SRRG. Dedicated Intranet page established; acting as a vehicle for sharing current information and best practice. WDC officers/councillors are actively participating in</p>		Managed By	V.ROGERS	
			Assigned To	J.DUFFY	

	<p>national forums to update SG as to WDC's position and stay updated on national advice</p> <p>Regular Workforce updates issued to ensure clarity of message and provide clear advice</p> <p>WDC/WDLT management to undertake reviews to find efficiencies to reduce costs and improve sustainability opportunities for savings and greater sustainability.</p> <p>Additional forums for collective consultation and information sharing established with trade unions.</p>			
Sub-Risks Description	Sub-Risks Measures of Impact/Internal Controls	Sub-Risks Traffic Light Icon		Sub-Risks Managed By
Workforce	<p>The Council is faced with significant workforce demands in relation to absence, reduction, recruitment and wellbeing.</p> <p>Employee absence as a result of self-isolation, infection or caring requirements. Workforce reductions - due to insufficient funding, employees leaving due to caring requirements and anxiety. Recruitment issues caused by insufficient funding, demand in certain areas and skills. Wellbeing with employees working for an extended period at home, mental health, DSE and ongoing supports.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans reflect employee absences of up to 30% in determining how critical services will be delivered such diverting non critical roles to support key roles. Volunteer process in place to allow managers to apply for support and have volunteers identified and matched. To reduce the loss of key worker the council have promoted flexible working arrangements, providing childcare facilities and access to health supports.</p> <p>National and Government schemes being accessed such as DWP Kickstart. Recruitment processes reviewed with online process developed with Disclosure Scotland and SSSC.</p> <p>Wellbeing strategy in place with a focus on Mental Health supports, OH provider has delivered bespoke supports and i-learn has been expanded to support additional needs of the workforce. Significant internal demand on OH supports increasing costs substantially – little evidence of use of national supports for social care workers.</p>			
Service Delivery	<p>The Council is faced with significant delivery demands in relation to moving services online, disruption, reduction and quality.</p> <p>Services are disrupted as a result of employee absence, increased demand or lack of equipment/supplies. Reduction & quality are impacted due to insufficient funding leading to reduced numbers of employees and impacting on quality of service delivery.</p> <p>The Council have moved where possible to meet the needs of citizens via a more digital delivery method. Transformation projects will be reviewed in light of the developments made in this area.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plans identify critical activities and the minimum resources required to deliver critical activities – these were updated within the last 12 months.</p>			
Protection	<p>The Council is faced with significant demands for protection in relation to additional and constant changing legislation and guidelines, PPE requirements, supply chain, cost of PPE and ensuring workforce safety.</p> <p>WDC officers are actively participating in national forums to stay updated on national advice and ensure this is cascaded council wide. Officers from across the organisation review the SG COVID website daily to capture any changes.</p> <p>PPE demands continue and supply chain issues could impact upon our ability to purchase key equipment or resources, or affect any areas where we are reliant on a contractor. Business Continuity Plans consider supplier dependencies, including potential alternative suppliers.</p> <p>WDC have an established Risk assessment process to ensure safe practices for work.</p>			
Public +uncertainty	The Council is faced with significant demands around public uncertainty and leads to additional burdens upon services,			

	seeking information, advice and support.				
	Council continue to work with key stakeholders and citizens to ensure clarity of information as services recommence, ensuring this is shared with members of the public via social media/Council website, alongside FAQs being made available where necessary. Information on updated Government advice is distributed through these channels regularly, and as soon as possible after Govt announcements, Requests made via the contact centre to reduce burden on services.				
Progress of Linked Actions	Above risks managed via operational risk register				
Risk Opportunity	Enhance reputation of Council by being able to provide confidence clear guidance and supports Continue to build on digital service delivery via Digital Board plans. Continue with estate, assets and service delivery Enhance employees "feeling valued" by providing good conditions, wellbeing opportunities and supports Secure external funding for assisting in the delivery of council aims				

Risk Status	
	Alert
	High Risk
	Warning
	OK
	Unknown