



Moray Council Emergency Cabinet

Thursday, 21 May 2020

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **Moray Council Emergency Cabinet** is to be held at **Council Chambers, Council Office, High Street, Elgin, IV30 1BX** on **Thursday, 21 May 2020** at **11:00**.

BUSINESS

1. **Sederunt**
2. **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests ***
3. **Covid Response Report** **5 - 20**
Report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)
4. **Moray Local Review Body - Temporary Arrangements** **21 - 24**
due to Covid-19
Report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)
5. **Revised Education Plan Report** **25 - 42**
Report by the Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development)
6. **Financial Monitoring Report** **43 - 48**
Report by Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance)
7. **Economy Report** **49 - 62**
Report by the Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance)

8. Question Time ***

Consider any oral question on matters delegated to the Committee in terms of the Council's Scheme of Administration.

Moray Council Committee meetings are currently being held virtually due to Covid-19. If you wish to watch the webcast of the meeting please go to:
http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_43661.html
to watch the meeting live.

* **Declaration of Group Decisions and Members Interests** - The Chair of the meeting shall seek declarations from any individual or political group at the beginning of a meeting whether any prior decision has been reached on how the individual or members of the group will vote on any item(s) of business on the Agenda, and if so on which item(s). A prior decision shall be one that the individual or the group deems to be mandatory on the individual or the group members such that the individual or the group members will be subject to sanctions should they not vote in accordance with the prior decision. Any such prior decisions will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.

** **Written Questions** - Any Member can put one written question about any relevant and competent business within the specified remits not already on the agenda, to the Chair provided it is received by the Proper Officer or Committee Services by 12 noon two working days prior to the day of the meeting. A copy of any written answer provided by the Chair will be tabled at the start of the relevant section of the meeting. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than 10 minutes after the Council has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he or she can submit it in writing to the Proper Officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within 7 working days.

*** **Question Time** - At each ordinary meeting of the Committee ten minutes will be allowed for Members questions when any Member of the Committee can put a question to the Chair on any business within the remit of that Section of the Committee. The Member who has put the question may, after the answer has been given, ask one supplementary question directly related to the subject matter, but no discussion will be allowed.

No supplementary question can be put or answered more than ten minutes after the Committee has started on the relevant item of business, except with the consent of the Chair. If a Member does not have the opportunity to put a supplementary question because no time remains, then he/she can submit it in writing to the proper officer who will arrange for a written answer to be provided within seven working days.

Clerk Name:

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THE MORAY COUNCIL

Moray Council Emergency Cabinet

SEDERUNT

Councillor Shona Morrison (Chair)
Councillor Graham Leadbitter (Depute Chair)
Councillor George Alexander (Member)
Councillor John Divers (Member)
Councillor Tim Eagle (Member)
Councillor Donald Gatt (Member)
Councillor Derek Ross (Member)

Clerk Name:

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REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL EMERGENCY CABINET ON 21 MAY

**SUBJECT: EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES RESPONSE TO COVID 19**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITUES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Cabinet of the services within the Education, Communities and Organisational Development portfolio that have been developed and delivered during the Covid 19 pandemic to provide the response to the incident or to ensure continuity of critical council services.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Emergency Cabinet following a decision of Moray Council on 25 March 2020 to temporarily suspend all delegations to committees as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (para 2 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Cabinet review and note the services within the Education, Communities and Organisational Development portfolio that have been developed and delivered during the Covid 19 pandemic to provide the response to the incident or to ensure continuity of critical council services.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic the council has had to take a range of measures to ensure that critical services continue to be delivered and to develop and deliver a number of new services in response to the emergency. This has had to be done at pace in a dynamic and changing environment.
- 3.2 In response to the COVID-19 pandemic services have been temporarily closed, redesigned so that they can continue to operate during lockdown and taking account of social distancing requirements, and new services developed to help support Moray's citizens during this period of uncertainty and challenge. This report provides an overview of the services that have been maintained, often very differently from normal and those that have been rapidly created.

Education Central Team

- 3.3 A covid service plan has been developed in order to plan strategically and put in place operational guidance during the period of school closures and to plan ahead for the eventual return to school attendance. The plan has been set out under the following headings: Responsive; Resilient; and Readiness to Improve.
- 3.4 The plan is an iterative document that will be continually updated and amended in line with guidance received and national and local expectations. A summary of the workstreams is provided below and the full plan is reported in a separate paper to this Emergency Cabinet.

Childcare Hubs

- 3.5 The hub provision is well established and demand on hubs has continued to grow over the course of their existence with increases across almost all hubs and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings as key workers require childcare. The current position is over 120 children in school hubs and between 50 and 60 for ELC settings. Guidance was shared in terms of what hub activities would look like including supporting children to access and work on the learning set by their home school. An electronic volunteer form has been used to gather information on volunteers for the hubs and hub coordinators continue to look at rotas to ensure that volunteers who are teachers can also support learners with remote learning activities. Additional hubs are not required at this time. Positive feedback has been received from key workers who are extremely grateful of this service at a difficult time for them and their families.

Severe and Complex Workstream (Childcare Hubs)

- 3.6 Childcare hubs are also providing services for children with severe and complex needs as described in more detail below (paras 3.18 to 3.21).

Educational Continuity – Term 4

- 3.7 As Schools returned after the Spring break, the early focus was on the well-being of pupils and staff and supporting the adjustment to remote learning and working. Feedback from Head Teachers over the course of the first weeks indicated that a vast amount of work had been undertaken to prepare for the new term and that staff had been upskilling to ensure that they could connect with each other and with pupils through digital means. It is important that schools maintain their unique context as well as staff being able to use whichever platform or methods that they are most comfortable with and have been trained in. Staff have been encouraged to monitor their working hours so that these are not exceeded while working at home and to be mindful of individual circumstances including caring and other responsibilities.
- 3.8 Examples of practice to date are:
- Focus on wellbeing of children and maintaining a balance in expectations for parents to support – national expectation is around 2 hours per day

- Focus on wellbeing, literacy, numeracy and Inter-Disciplinary Learning (IDL) projects
- Use of online resources such as class dojo, show my homework, Education City, seesaw, kahoot, purple mash
- Preparation and use of physical learning packs (many distributed in GDPR compliant way and also physically to doorstep)
- Delivery and team collaboration through Google classrooms/Teams
- Learning Grids posted on Monday, contact sheet to HT by Friday then follow up if not engaged
- Accessing resources via school website or parents through closed FB page
- Twitter challenges, daily quizzes
- Families getting physical packs including paper, pens, rulers, etc. to support this

3.9 Progress will continue to be monitored and national advice followed. The covid service plan sets out a wide range of work to be developed, some now well progressed and other actions to be delivered over the coming weeks to support a remote education service. For example, advice is being prepared for schools on expectations to ensure consistency; a wakelet (small website) has been developed with a wide range of resources available to support learning and teachers; and guidance has recently been issued to allow children access to ICT hardware to support remote learning.

Connect Workstream in Schools

3.10 Guidance has been developed for use by practitioners in schools on how to support our more vulnerable children and families. Vulnerable children and families were identified by schools to ensure that the needs of those of most concern continued to be met. Head teachers have reported that families are being supported in the following ways:

- Phoning/contacting all children over the course of the first week of term
- Using home school link worker, PSA, or other agency contacts, to support young person/family, as best suits situation
- Forming pupil staff groupings with specific staff allocated to particular families
- Using preferred contact of parents e.g. email, class dojo, teams – some of this 1:1
- Created “comfy” room on google classrooms for most vulnerable
- Assessed children into 1-4 as per connect guidance to ensure appropriate support
- Daily check-ins by class teacher in variety of ways
- School newsletter and daily quiz or challenge to engage children
- Taken learning packs to doorsteps to make contact with families

3.11 Cases are referred into the Multi Agency Screening hub as described below.

Education Support

Supporting Vulnerable Children (Connect Service)

- 3.12 For some the absence of a regular school day and other community supports can escalate their vulnerability. With only a small number of children and young people physically attending a school due to Covid, it was important to establish a service to ensure continuing support for those who might need it throughout this period.
- 3.13 The Connect Service was established to provide a virtual 'Named Person' service, offering support to schools where there is a risk of increasing vulnerability, so that our collective resources can be used to provide meaningful interventions, promote individual and family wellbeing, and reduce the risk of escalation.
- 3.14 The Connect Offer promotes input at four different levels:
Universal – as described above in the Connect at schools section. For pre-school children the universal offer is delivered by Health Visitors.

Universal with Support - offered by the Health Visiting Service or school in partnership with school inclusion workers and/or central supports e.g. Home School Link Workers, Educational Psychology, Youth Workers. Minimum of 1 weekly contact by phone/email/online.

Targeted Support – flexible delivery based on relational approaches. Delivered in close partnership with the relevant school/Health Visitor by Connect Team with a twice weekly phone/text/online contact, fortnightly 'eyes on' support, provision of wellbeing support packs, online conversation and group offers.

Intensive Targeted Support - for the most vulnerable children and families, led by Social Work and in partnership with the Connect Team as required. Individual personalised packages put in place, with some children allocated places at the Childcare Hubs.

- 3.15 The Connect Service also offers a Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH) to coordinate multi-agency discussions and to plan for a holistic and timely response to emerging needs. A child can be referred to the MASH at any of the four different levels described above with supports and resources available from all participating agencies, and with links into third sector and community supports. The MASH meets virtually twice a week. The support provided will be varied, focussing on virtual contacts but recognising the need for some 'in person' contact but taking account of social distancing guidance at all times.
- 3.16 The Connect Team is multi-disciplinary with input from the SEBN Service, Locality Teams, Youth Work, Health, Police, Social Work, Educational Psychology and Early Years.

Additional Support Needs (Severe and Complex)

- 3.17 The Additional Support Needs team has focussed on supporting schools to support children to continue their learning at home while schools are closed. Principal Teachers ASN are providing learning packs and online resources for stimulation and interaction at home. Principal Teachers ASN or key workers

are also in regular contact with families, with further support available from Social Work and the Third Sector.

- 3.18 Where professionals working with families consider that support is required outside of the home, to offer more direct contact and to provide respite for vulnerable families, there is also the possibility of requesting a place at one of three 'severe and complex hubs' across Moray – at Ladybird Developmental Playgroup (Lossiemouth) for pre-school children and at Millbank and Keith Primary Schools for school age children.
- 3.19 Places are allocated through the MASH process described above, with attendance agreed following a detailed risk assessment. The number of sessions allocated is dependent on individual circumstances and follows the principle of minimising the amount of time outside of the home in line with Scottish Government guidance. Transport to the severe and complex is available if required, and lunch is also provided.
- 3.20 The Severe and Complex workstream is supported by a multi-agency team including Principal Teachers ASN and Health representatives.

Educational Psychology

- 3.21 The Educational Psychology service is offering a fully virtual service, continuing to support children and families known to them, and attending virtual case reviews and child's planning meetings. In response to the COVID-19 crisis the team has also been developing additional supports for schools, colleagues, families and children including:
- A categorised list of resources to support colleagues, children and families during the crisis
 - A listening ear service (phone call) for colleagues, parents and children (with the option to refer into Educational Psychology for ongoing support)
 - Looking at themes from the phone calls received, developing resources associated with the most common themes to support discussions with parents (e.g. Emotions Coaching, Transitions).

SEBN Service

- 3.22 The SEBN Service is continuing to support children referred to their service prior to the crisis with wellbeing packs and regular virtual (and in person if required) contact in line with the targeted supports described in the Connect Team section above. The Service is also fully involved in supporting the Connect Service.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

- 3.23 The EAL service is continuing to support the wellbeing and language learning of EAL learners and their parents using virtual methods (phone, email, GLOW). The service is also developing resource packs to enable learners to continue to develop their English Language skills while the schools are closed.

Sensory Support Services

- 3.24 The Sensory Support Service is continuing to support the wellbeing and learning of children with sensory needs, linking in with parents using online methods and developing and distributing resources to support continued engagement.

Moray Autism Service

- 3.25 The Moray Autism Service is continuing to support the wellbeing of autistic children, young people and their families through virtual methods (phone, email, GLOW). The service is also signposting families to online support resources that help them maintain positive family routines and reduce anxieties. Team members are also supporting young people in the Hubs and delivering respite activities in the community.

Business Support - Free School Meals

- 3.26 The Business Support Team established and is continuing to manage the Free School Meal Voucher scheme for pre-school and school age children. Over 94% of families who are entitled to receive school meals have been contacted and have been provided with vouchers.
- 3.27 The Team is also completing placing requests, reviewing changes to the DSM scheme and continuing with essential school recruitment.

Instrumental Music Service

- 3.28 The Instrumental Music Service Instructors are developing opportunities such as tutorial videos, instructor feedback on pupils recording of their playing and are developing how to offer lessons via video call. General musical challenges have been shared on the service Facebook page. The Youth Music Initiative Instructors are providing music related activities to class teachers and Instructors are available to discuss learners' progress and provide advice regarding next steps.

Sport & Leisure

- 3.29 All sport and leisure facilities were closed on Friday 20 March and currently remain closed. Weekly sports challenges have been developed and shared on the service Facebook page. Sports and leisure staff have been carrying out essential pool maintenance duties, although some are now redeployed.

Libraries & Information Services

- 3.30 Libraries closed on Friday 20 March and currently remain closed. The service has increased investment in online resources (e-books, e-audiobooks and e-comics) for access from home and new borrowers can sign up for membership online. An online book club is available through the service Facebook page.

Essential Skills and Learning Centre Advisors, Records Management teams

- 3.31 Continuing to provide services remotely where possible

Duke of Edinburgh (DofE)

- 3.32 “DofE with a Difference” was launched nationally, which enables participants to change activities and capture assessments with the support of parents in the home. Staff continue to support young people who access their DofE accounts

Community Resilience

Grampian Community Assistance Hub (GCAH)

- 3.33 Public sector organisations across Moray and Grampian have been working in partnership to make sure our local communities, businesses and residents receive all the support they need during the Covid-19 crisis. A virtual contact centre was established to serve residents of Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. A particular area of focus for this new service has been support for individuals and households impacted by the pandemic, including those who are shielding and those who have health vulnerabilities. The contact centre provides a crucial link between the needs of individuals and support within communities. The service directs people to where they can access help including:

- essential food and medication
- links to local social work services for vulnerable children or adults
- accessing emotional support
- contacting local volunteer groups

Moray Community Resilience Teams

- 3.34 A more local Moray Community Resilience Team (MCRT) has been set up to complement and support the work of the GCAH. The MCRT includes staff from the Council Community Support Unit, Moray Health and Social Care Partnership and tsiMORAY. The team works in localities to support established and establishing voluntary and community groups who are responding to the COVID-19 emergency, mapping local services and the need they are addressing in communities; ensuring resilience in the arrangements as the pandemic progresses; providing a link service for other Moray Council/MHSCP teams to the community support so that service users can be supported in a responsive and coordinated way; and looking at how community resilience can be developed and sustained as we move into the recovery phase.
- 3.35 The teams have also supported groups to access external funding through HIE, William Grant, The Adam Family Foundation and Moray Emergency Relief Fund to name a few.
- 3.36 The team is also working with tsiMORAY to develop a single source of information (hosted on the tsiMORAY website) on all the COVID related responses (public sector, third sector and community) as a resource for all professionals and communities across Moray.

Community Food Fund

- 3.37 The locality teams will be working with community organisations to develop applications to the Moray Council Food Fund, developing community food responses to emerging need, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups (including those who have become isolated due to isolation and social distancing measures) and marginalised people who may be less engaged with public services (e.g. homeless, gypsy travellers, refugees etc.).

Governance Strategy & Performance

Welfare Benefits and Money Advice

- 3.38 The benefits team have seen an increase in demand for support for people in financial difficulty during this time. A 'Money Worries during the Coronavirus Outbreak' leaflet has been prepared and summarises the support available. Welfare benefits claims have increased compared to the same period last year and there continue to be weekly increases in applications for Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis and Support grants.
- 3.39 In addition to administering the normal range of benefits, the team have assisted with identifying those who were eligible for school meal vouchers and shielded individuals who qualify for fresh food deliveries on financial grounds.
- 3.40 People applying for benefits are also being assessed for eligibility for the Flexible Food Fund which has been developed locally and is administered by the Welfare benefits team.

Revenues/Non Domestic Rates Team

- 3.41 Debt enforcement has been de-prioritised and the team have concentrated on maximising direct debit income. A large piece of work has been administering the Scottish Government business support grants. As at 5 May 2020 the team had dealt with 1,354 applications and awarded 1,117 grants totalling over £12 million pounds.

Registrars

- 3.42 Services for registration of births and marriages have been suspended and arrangements have been put in place for remote registration of deaths.

Performance Reporting

- 3.43 A weekly Covid response dashboard has been developed for oversight of local statistics related to the pandemic. The RIO team has also provided support for a range of information and research tasks, for example to enable the establishment of free school meals and food fund services, reporting on benefits claims, information gathering on critical services for the emergency response and recovery planning.

Contact Centre and Access Points

- 3.44 Access Points have been closed to the public and Contact Centre calls have been screened to prioritise essential services. Messaging has asked the public to use online or telephone services where possible. This has meant an overall reduction in calls and increase in emails to the Contact Centre, which has worked well with staff working remotely.

Legal, Licensing and Committee

- 3.45 Legal services have been operating on a skeleton staffing arrangement to support essential services and a maintaining a baseline of activity in Licensing. Committee staff have been supporting the Emergency Cabinet and looking at future arrangements for virtual meetings.

HR, ICT and Communications

Human Resources

- 3.46 The HR service has focused on critical service delivery during the emergency including Payroll, Health and Safety and workforce planning and policy issues. The range of adjustments that have been required to the council's employment framework are summarised in Appendix 1. In addition the HR team has gathered information on the skills and experience of employees not required to maintain critical service delivery across the council and has identified suitable staff and organised their deployment to alternative work to support the emergency response.
- 3.47 An interchange page has been established for all of the guidance to staff and managers.

Communications

- 3.48 There has been an increased focus on communications which has required rapid turnaround and frequent communications to keep up with the changing situation. Weekly briefings have been established for staff, managers and elected members as well as the council coronavirus webpages, regular press releases and social media activity.

Technology

- 3.49 Following the government advice to encourage people to work from home and the council's move to deliver critical and emergency response services only, the ICT Service set out to provide equipment to critical service staff to enable them to work from home. However, providing equipment for homeworking to critical service users was viewed as phase 1 of an ongoing requirement to enable most, if not all, staff with the ability to work from home. In the first stages of the emergency, the assessment of the requirement for critical services gave rise to 290 new requests to enable homeworking. These request were met and services allocated the hardware to priority staff.
- 3.50 This resulted in the potential for over 600 devices attempting to access the council network. This required an extension to the access to the virtual private network (vpn) which is used to provide a secure connection to the council network from home. Pending the delivery of the equipment required,

restrictions were put in place to manage the volume of traffic on the vpn, including alternative ways of working and ICT staff volunteering to provide extended hours of support. Access to the VPN has now been expanded to enable greater homeworking and further hardware will be rolled out taking account of the priority allocated to services as part of the emergency response or preparing for recovery.

- 3.51 Video conferencing (VC) has become a key tool during the pandemic. While a VC solution has been available for use by council staff for some time, demand has escalated rapidly. Arrangements are being made to expand the options for VC and these will be rolled out as soon as the supplier gives the go ahead. While using a fully secure system is essential for formal communications where personal or sensitive data may be exchanged, for general keep in touch communication between staff, a number of solutions can be used for example, WhatsApp, Facetime, Skype.
- 3.52 The ICT team have also been working with schools on the provision of technology to support remote learning and on external funding to increase the provision of technology in schools.
- 3.53 A number of e-Forms have been developed to assist services with their response including key worker childcare applications, pupil equipment loan requests and self-referral form for Covid-19 testing,

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

There are no direct implications arising from this report. All action taken is consistent with the corporate plan and Loip.

(b) Policy and Legal
None

(c) Financial implications

Financial implications have been considered as part of the development of the responses to the Covid pandemic and are reported by the Chief Financial Officer in regular monitoring reports. In particular there has been a requirement to fund additional ICT equipment to expand homeworking, the extension of the EAP provision, for food support which has been funded through the government Food Fund and for the Scottish Government business support grants.

(d) Risk Implications

None from report. A number of the measures described in the report have been put in place to address risk. There ongoing risks as the Council continues its emergency response, moves into recovery and begins to re-instate services. These will be considered and addressed as planning for the whole programme of work and individual service issues progresses.

(e) Staffing Implications

Deployed Staff

Employees from the following services have been deployed to alternative work to support the emergency response. All employees have been deployed on a voluntary basis and their flexibility has been greatly appreciated:

- Libraries - redeployed to support (virtually) the Grampian Covid-19 Assistance Hub;
- Active School Coordinators volunteered to work in the Childcare Hubs
- Sports and Leisure redeployed to the Community Pharmacy Scheme; collecting medicines from local pharmacies and delivering them to vulnerable and shielded individuals across Moray;
- Audit – support for the welfare benefits team

Many council employees are now working from home and this is continuing to expand. Including teaching staff, over 1500 employees are now actively working at home with many others making use of personal devices for more limited homeworking pending the extension of council provision beyond critical services. While homeworking has been established in Moray since the Council was created in 1996 and was expanded during the Designing Better Service programme, the scale and extent (100% of time for many) during Covid is new and has brought challenges for employees and managers.

Managers and supervisors, including head teachers have been maintaining contact with employees to ensure that they are engaging and supporting individuals and groups of staff. Remote supervision and contact with colleagues can be isolating and new approaches are being developed to deal with this such as planned informal team chats. There is no doubt that this experience will influence the design of work and provide flexibility and resilience for the future.

The employee assistance provision Time for Talking has been extended to ensure that there is independent advice and support available for employees to access.

(f) Property

None directly arising from this report. However, a number of council properties are being used differently from normal to support the council and community response to the emergency.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

None directly arising from this report, although a number of the measures put in place in response to the covid pandemic have been to respond to socio economic and equalities issues.

(h) Consultations

The Heads of Service in Education, Communities and Organisational Development have all contributed to this report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1** The covid pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented change to the delivery of council services. For critical services, immediate changes were required to enable as much as possible to be delivered remotely, which has resulted in new ways of working and modified services. There will be many lessons to be learned from this and as the council moves towards recovery, planning and review has commenced to ensure that these lessons are taken forward into future service delivery models.
- 5.2** It has also been necessary to design and deliver new services and solutions at pace, including childcare for keyworkers, a covid support hub, community resilience teams, financial support to ensure access to food for those facing hardship and many revised employment arrangements. There has also been a transformational shift to remote services and homeworking which will be influential in future service and job design.
- 5.3** It is likely to be some time before a new normal prevails. A number of the services established in the emergency response will have to continue for some time. Meanwhile, services such as schools are evolving to deliver services in new ways as society adjusts to living with covid, and other services will be re-activating to resume their normal roles. This will prove challenging to deliver in tandem and planning is underway to ensure a measured programme of work with a clear vision that builds in flexibility and resilience as this covid pandemic continues to unfold.

Author of Report: Denise Whitworth
Background Papers: None

Employment Framework: Summary of key temporary changes during the COVID-19 pandemic

It has been necessary to temporarily amend some HR Policies and Procedures aimed at assisting managers and employees to continue to deliver essential services throughout the period of the pandemic. These changes have been developed in consultation with our trade union colleagues and will be applied with immediate effect. It is anticipated these arrangements will be in place for a minimum of 3 months. HR are continuing to provide a Duty Service during this period.

1 Mental Health and Wellbeing

Employees are encouraged to take time to manage their health and wellbeing and make use of the self-help materials available on interchange. The Managers' Toolkit for Managing Remotely and Ensuring the Mental Health and Wellbeing of all Employees is available on interchange and managers have been reminded of this.

2. Health and Work

Information, support and guidance continues to be provided to employees who are absent from work due to long term absence during the pandemic period. Although all formal absence review meetings have been suspended until further notice, it is important to keep in touch with employees on sick leave.

The Health and Work Policy has been amended as follows:

- Employees and currently engaged casual workers with less than 26 weeks service will have entitlement to full pay if they have Covid-19 related absence over the period of the pandemic.
- Sickness absence related to Covid-19 will be ignored for attendance management purposes i.e. trigger levels, warnings etc.
- All employees and currently engaged casual workers absent from work due to Covid-19 related sickness absence will receive their normal pay even if they have exhausted their contractual allowance.
- All cases of formal absence management under the policy will be suspended.

3. Special Leave

The Council is taking extraordinary measures to protect staff and delay the spread of COVID-19 during the period of the pandemic. The use of special leave was initially extended to facilitate this (from 5 to 15 days paid leave).

Following the national lockdown the position was extended further for the following groups as follows:

- All employees with a long-term condition, covered by the government's shielding programme, and who have been told to isolate, will continue to receive their normal pay. (12 week period)
- All employees with covid symptoms who are self-isolating for the recommended 7 day period will continue to receive their normal pay.
- All employees who live in a household with someone who is self-isolating because they are displaying symptoms, will receive normal pay until the recommended period of self-isolation ends and the employee is able to return to work.
- Pregnant mothers will continue to receive normal pay until the start of maternity arrangements for pay or until they are able to return to work safely based on a risk assessment which takes account of whether or not the employee is less than or more than 28 weeks pregnant.
- Employees with emergency caring responsibilities will be granted special

leave with full pay while they need to carry out such responsibilities, unless they are a keyworker who is required to work who qualifies for places for their children in a childcare facility.

- Employees who are not key workers, cannot work from home and cannot secure a deployment position will continue to receive their normal pay if they have been asked not to attend work. (See Place of Work arrangements below).

4. Homeworking and Core Hours

Arrangements for flexible working have been amended to support the increase in homeworking to allow employees who are homeworking to also carry out caring duties, for example by changing current work patterns, start and finish times. All work should be carried out, where possible, within the hours of 0700 to 1900 and managers are monitoring to ensure hours worked are not excessive.

The Toolkit and Guidance on Managing Remote Working are available on interchange.

5. Overtime

Overtime continues to be monitored and wherever possible limit expenditure on overtime. Overtime should only be authorised for key workers where other employees cannot be deployed to deliver essential services.

6. Seconded and Interim Arrangements

Seconded and Interim Arrangements – Where employees have been appointed or seconded on an interim basis and are due to come to an end, these arrangements will remain in place unless otherwise notified by their line manager.

7. Employees Undertaking Temporary Higher Duties and Secondments

The Council's Secondment Policy and procedures to remunerate Employees Undertaking Temporary Higher Duties have been suspended for the period of the pandemic for new arrangements.

Where an employee takes on new duties graded at a different level from their current job role they will receive their normal pay or the rate of pay for their new job role, whichever is the higher. Any change in payment will be made from day one of their deployment.

Employees taking on new roles will be properly inducted, trained, supervised and provided with necessary personal protective equipment.

8. Annual Leave

Annual leave entitlement is unaffected by the pandemic. Approval of annual leave is being managed to allow essential services to be provided while ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.

Employees in non-critical services are expected to take their annual leave on a proportionate basis throughout the leave year, or in a similar pattern to previous use of annual leave.

Employees in critical services should take contractual leave that is above the 4 weeks (20 days) covered by the statutory carry over regulations before the end of the current 2020 leave year. That means that at least contractual leave entitlement and the remaining 8 days of statutory leave should be used in the current leave year.

Employees who have bought additional leave under the Holiday Buy Back Scheme

should use this leave as planned.

Management Guidance has been prepared – COVID 19 & Annual Leave.

9. Place of Work

All Moray Council buildings are closed to the public, with the exception of a number of schools providing a childcare hub for keyworkers.

All employees who are not key workers are working from home where possible. Where this is not possible, HR are holding details on the deployment register which is being used to identify and deploy people to key worker duties to ensure the continued delivery of essential and critical services.

If deployment to a new location involves excess mileage an allowance will be paid equal to the difference in cost of travel compared to travel to normal work location.

10. ID Badges

Staff who are undertaking key workers duties and are required to travel, if stopped by the police use their Council ID badge as proof of who they are and explain what they are doing.

11. Recruitment

All normal external recruitment to the Council has ceased. Urgent and essential recruitment for key workers continues where necessary, through myjobscotland as normal. A number of suspended recruitments are also being re-activated, e.g. for promoted teaching posts

12. Disclosure Scotland/PVGs

Disclosure Scotland have made a number of amendments to normal processes in direct response to the Covid-19 situation.

1. Employees are permitted to start work pending the outcome of the PVG application. A risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place.
2. Disclosure Scotland has suspended all fees for key workers and volunteers.
3. A temporary change for electronic applications became effective from 30th March.

13. Deployment of Staff to Alternative Duties

A process for employees who have been internally transferred has been developed to ensure that they are appropriately remunerated where the new role is on a higher grade or attracts enhanced payments. It also ensures that the required confirmation is sent to employees.

14. Home Visits

Home visits should only be carried out where they are required to deliver essential services by key workers and no other method of communication or service delivery is practical.

Specific guidance on home visits will be provided to the appropriate employees by their managers. Guidance is available on the interchange.

15. Employee Assistance Programme (Time for Talking)

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) through Time for Talking has been extended so employees can access support. The provision is for a 24/7 support service offering: structured telephone counselling; telephone support; live chat and

information and resources including links, podcasts and meditation exercises

16. Occupational Health Support

The Council's Occupational Health provider continues to providing support during the COVID-19 crisis. A new advice line is available providing support to employees on areas such as working from home, emotional support/wellbeing and musculoskeletal advice for work related concerns.

17. Disciplinary/Grievance/Performance Management/FARMS

It's been agreed with the trade unions that the majority of employee relations activity (such as managing absence, disciplinaries and grievances) are put on hold until they can be properly progressed. An assessment of any potential situations where an employee may be at detriment by this is being undertaken and may be progressed on a case by case basis.

18. Further COVID-19 Guidance

A COVID-19 page has been set up on the interchange. This contains general information on how to keep yourself safe and healthy and how the coronavirus might affect your work.

Human Resources April 2020.



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL EMERGENCY CABINET – 21 MAY 2020

**SUBJECT: MORAY LOCAL REVIEW BODY – TEMPORARY
ARRANGEMENTS DUE TO COVID-19**

**BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To ask the Emergency Cabinet to consider and agree temporary arrangements to determine appeals submitted to the Moray Local Review Body (MLRB) during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Emergency Cabinet following a decision of Moray Council on 25 March 2020 to temporarily suspend all delegations to committees as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (para 2 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Emergency Cabinet consider and agree:
 - i) to reinstate the Moray Local Review Body and note that meetings will be held virtually where possible; and
 - ii) that the requirement to carry out a site inspection for every Notice of Review be temporarily suspended.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 25 March 2020, the Moray Council agreed to temporarily suspend all delegations to committees as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. At this meeting it was agreed that further consideration would have to be given to quasi-judicial decisions and regulated processes such as the MLRB (para 2 (viii) of the minute refers).

4. CURRENT SITUATION

- 4.1 Currently, there are 4 appeals awaiting determination, one of which has been referred for a Hearing following an earlier decision of the MLRB. Each Applicant was contacted advising that the MLRB process was temporarily suspended until agreement had been reached as to how to determine appeals whilst taking into consideration the suspension of all committees and

restrictions due to Covid-19.

- 4.2 Options are being considered to improve on the current video conferencing facilities available within the council. It is proposed that meetings will take place either with a small number of members in the chamber following social distancing rules or virtually where possible.
- 4.3 The Chief Planner issued a letter to all planning authorities on 3 April 2020 and confirmed that, throughout the current Covid-19 crisis and beyond, maintaining a functioning planning system is a top priority for the Scottish Government to support economic development and to ensure planning authorities are in a position to make decisions vital to the recovery of communities and businesses. Ensuring review decisions can be made fairly and efficiently is an important element within that.
- 4.4 The MLRB procedure is governed by the Town and Country Planning (Schemes of Delegation and Local Review Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013. Due to Covid-19, regulations were made on 24 April 2020 which have temporarily amended the 2013 regs so that there is no need to hold the meeting in public. To aid transparency however, it is hoped that the meeting can either be webcast or a recording of the meeting uploaded to the webcast following the meeting.
- 4.5 At the meeting of the MLRB held on 23 August 2012 (paragraph 3 of the Minute refers), the MLRB agreed that all Notice of Reviews (NORs) would be subject to a site inspection prior to determination. It was also agreed that these inspections would be attended by Members and Officers of the MLRB only. Given the current restrictions on making essential travel journeys only and the need to maintain social distancing it is proposed that the requirement for site inspections for every NOR be temporarily suspended. Where they have not already done so, applicants can be asked to submit detailed photos of the site. There are also easily accessible online resources such as Google Earth. Where it is not possible to meaningfully view a site by any means then the MLRB will have to go on to determine whether it is preferable to defer consideration or determine the review anyway.
- 4.6 As outlined above these meetings will not be open to the public. This will not prejudice applicants as almost all MLRB cases are determined using a written submission procedure.
- 4.7 With regard to the outstanding Hearing, it is proposed to conduct this by way of a virtual video conference meeting as described above. The only difference is that the Applicant and relevant planning officer have the opportunity to address the MLRB at a hearing, therefore they would be provided with the information so that they can join the meeting remotely.

5. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

It is important that the Council continue to carry out its obligation to review planning decisions where the Applicant disagrees with the decision of the Appointed Officer.

(b) Policy and Legal

As stated above, the Regulations governing the business of the MLRB have been temporarily amended by The Town and Country Planning (Miscellaneous Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 but only to remove the requirement for meetings to be held in public. Therefore further internal arrangements are required to move more towards business as usual.

(c) Financial Implications

None

(d) Risk Implications

Streamlining the Council's decision making process, for example temporarily dispensing with site visits, could compromise transparency in the decision making process. However, the proposals are considered to be a reasonable way of holding a committee and enabling appeals to be heard in light of the current exceptional circumstances.

(e) Staffing Implications

None

(f) Property

None

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

No direct implications have been identified.

The proposals are aimed at ensuring compliance with Art 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (Right to a fair trial) under the current circumstances.

Any quasi judicial process naturally has implications for the human rights and this is true for planning applicants.

In particular any compromise in the independence and transparency of the decision making process has the potential to adversely affect those human rights. However this has to be balanced with the potential adverse affects of delay. That is delay in determining applications and delay in economic recovery. The proposals are therefore considered proportionate and necessary.

(h) Consultations

Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance, Legal Services Manager, Democratic Services Manager, Mr Hoath, Senior Solicitor, the Principal Planning Officer (Strategic Planning and Development) and the Equalities Officer have all been consulted and any comments incorporated into the report.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 All committees have been temporarily suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic and an Emergency Cabinet has been formed. It is recognised that quasi-judicial decisions and regulated processes such as the MLRB have to continue in a safe environment therefore agreement is being sought to hold meetings of the MLRB in the most effective manner to**

enable decisions on review requests to be made whilst respecting the current restrictions in place.

Author of Report: Lissa Rowan, Committee Services Officer
Background Papers:
Ref:



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL EMERGENCY CABINET ON 21 MAY 2020

SUBJECT: COVID-19 - REVISED EDUCATION PLAN

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (EDUCATION, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on changes to the Education Strategic plan to take account of COVID-10 impact on service delivery.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Emergency Cabinet following a decision of Moray Council on 25 March 2020 to temporarily suspend all delegations to committees as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (para 2 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Emergency Cabinet:

- (i) acknowledge the changing position due to Covid-19 pandemic;
- (ii) agrees the revised plan which will be subject to further review and development;
- (iii) acknowledge the impact of remote learning on learners and expected outcomes; and
- (iv) agrees that a further paper is presented to Children and Young People's Services Committee once all Committees reconvene to update on progress, or to the Emergency Cabinet should an urgent issue arise before then.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Education plan (Schools and Curriculum Development Strategic Plan) which has run from 2018 focused on 6 strategic areas which aligned with the National Improvement Framework (NIF) and other areas of priority for the Scottish Government including equity and excellence. These were:

- Raise Attainment and Achievement
- Learning and Teaching
- Curriculum

- Self-evaluation for Self-improvement
- Supporting Learners
- Leadership at all Levels

3.2 The impact of strategic work to date has impacted positively on attainment levels as seen in Achievement of a Level data, senior phase data across a number of measures, positive inspection reports, improved leadership, a wider curriculum offer, particularly in the senior phase, improved processes to support learners and more accurate self-evaluation across establishments.

4. Education Plan 2020-2023

4.1 The Head of Education (Chief Education Officer) started a review of the Education Plan as a result of the management restructure and Early Years being a part of the strategic portfolio as well as aligning with other Educational delivery services assigned to the Head of Education Resources i.e. Additional Support Needs, Special Educational Behaviour Needs (SEBN) and Educational Psychological Services.

4.2 Evidence for the plan came from the Standards and Quality Report which was a large self-evaluation exercise as well as school inspection reports, data and schools for the future reports.

4.3 The Education Strategy Group, consisting of Head teachers, Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) and officers finalised the plan which has a clear focus on getting it right for every child in Moray in order to improve outcomes for all. This is driven by robust self-evaluation for self-improvement and is underpinned by the Council's values; fair, ambitious, improving and responsive. The plan will focus on:

- Curriculum
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- Leadership
- Supporting all learners

Each priority area has clear strategic priorities in order to further improve Educational outcomes in Moray for learners.

4.4 Curriculum:

- Provides progressive learner pathways from 2-18 to develop skills for learning, life and work
- Deliver a responsive curriculum reflecting clear vision, values and aims
- Collaborative approaches will be developed through flexible opportunities to meet the needs of all learners

4.5 Learning, Teaching and Assessment:

- Action and embed our Moray Standard
- Promote personal and collegiate responsibility for improved learning and teaching through professional learning and collaboration

- Build and sustain a culture of reflective and empowered leaders of learning at all levels in our system opportunities to meet the needs of all learners

4.6 Leadership:

- Develop practitioners' skills and knowledge of leadership in line with professional standards and expectations
- Review and implement a revised framework for professional development and career pathways
- Enable and promote empowerment and leadership across our system

4.7 Supporting all Learners

- Develop a culture of inclusion, equity and diversity leading to improved outcomes for all
- Promote resilience and positive mental health, emotional, physical and social wellbeing supported through multi-agency working
- Listen, engage and work collaboratively within communities to reduce the impact of poverty and create a safe and nurturing environment

4.8 The plan has yet to be endorsed by Children and Young People's Services Committee due to the disruption to normal service. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a need for new plans to be developed and implemented in order to implement a new service as well as provide remote learning.

5. **COVID-19 REVISED EDUCATION PLAN**

5.1 The Scottish Government made the decision to close schools on 19 March with effect from close of play on Friday 20 March 2020. Plans had already been put in place for schools to consider supporting remote learning and for the final week of the spring term, children across Moray were provided with learning packs and set activities to maintain education provision remotely.

5.2 On 24 March, the Deputy First Minister announced in Parliament that local authorities were to put in place arrangements for childcare for key workers and for vulnerable children as well as other provisions. This required a number of strategic workstreams to be set up by officers across the department with Education leading on remote learning and childcare hubs for key workers across Early Learning Settings and schools. Education staff were also involved in the Connect workstream for vulnerable children. The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examination diet for 2020 was cancelled and a new procedure for estimates introduced.

5.3 As lockdown continued, advice and guidance has been received from the Scottish Government and other national organisations in order to continue to support remote learning, provide childcare and ensure that staff and children and young people's wellbeing is closely monitored. It became clear that schools were unlikely to reopen this term and so the Scottish Government has created an Education Recovery Group with 10 workstreams:

- Term 4 learning
- Preparing for the next academic year
- Curriculum and assessment
- Supporting learners from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pastoral care for children and young people
- Workforce support
- Workforce planning
- School improvement in a new context
- Critical childcare
- Early learning and childcare

These groups are led by Education Scotland senior leaders with representation from national groups, teaching and non teaching unions, Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) and other key partners.

- 5.4 In response to the national expectations and to take account of work already progressing in Moray a revised Education plan has been implemented which will be a working document to bridge the 'old' Schools and Curriculum Development Plan and the new draft Education Plan taking account of the Covid-19 actions and priorities. This plan is attached and will be subject to constant review, update and amendments as work progresses and national advice and guidance is received. Officers will red, amber, green (RAG) rate the plan and regularly update it. There is a degree of uncertainty and unpredictability which requires constant reflection and updating.
- 5.5 The plan has been set out in stages i.e. Responsive, Resilient and Readiness to Improve. The Responsive section outlines what has been achieved so far and in very short timescales. For example the childcare hub planning to implementation took 7 officers 3 days to execute with support and help from ICT, catering, cleaning, janitorial staff and business support staff. The other areas of the plan are what officers are currently working on and will continue to until schools are fully operational. Current consideration is being given to re-opening schools following strict social distancing guidance. This will require input from a variety of Council services and departments.
- 5.6 Feedback to date from Head teachers and Early Years' managers informs us that there is already variability in terms of engagement in remote learning. Parents cannot replicate the school day and remote learning will not cover all that is covered when children and young people are in a school or early years setting. Concerns have already been raised about lack of routines in households and about the wellbeing of children and young people and their families. It is vital that children and young people's wellbeing is a major focus for any return to school and this may be for some time ahead. The impact of this will mean that efforts to raise attainment will take second place to ensure healthy minds and a readiness to learn.
- 5.7 Consideration has also to be given to the capacity of the Education team to be able to deliver what is required in the time expected. Capacity has been raised for some time and work to date has only been possible due to the long hours that officers are currently working, with leave dates being cancelled to

meet expectations. There is a huge risk if illness affects the team or any support services without whose help this could not be achieved.

6. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS.

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

This report relates to the priority 'Provide opportunities where young people can achieve their potential to be the best they can be from the Corporate Plan and to 'Building a better future for our children and young people in Moray' from the LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

National policy guidance is being reviewed regularly as the Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect services including Education. Current reporting processes are being reviewed and guidance issued by the Scottish Government is adhered to as and when received.

(c) Financial implications

Any financial implications are being recorded as Covid-19 costs and monitored regularly. School recovery will incur additional costs as well as maintaining Free School Meal voucher provision and childcare hub costs.

(d) Risk implications

The risks associated with this plan are the capacity of officers to maintain current working hours to deliver what is required. There is a small team working on the majority of the key tasks and if absent this will put significant pressure on the service and the ability to implement plans for school recovery. Childcare hubs are in operation due to staff volunteering to work in them. There is a risk if volunteer numbers reduce.

(e) Staffing implications

The effects of report, trace and isolate may have an impact on staffing across hubs, to support remote learning and also to re-open schools.

(f) Property

Property issues may arise as we implement return to schooling with strict adherence to social distancing as well as ensuring that schools are maintained to the correct levels of health and safety and cleaning requirements to keep staff and children safe.

(g) Equalities

None arising directly from this report

(h) Consultations

Depute Chief Executive (Education, Communities and Organisational Development), Quality Improvement Managers, Lindsey Stanley, Business Support Team Manager, Grant Cruickshank, Senior HR Adviser, Paul Connor, Principal Accountant, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officer have

been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report as regards their respective responsibilities.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 A reviewed strategic plan has been implemented to take forward the work associated with school closures and implementation of childcare hub settings as well as support remote learning. The reviewed plan is a bridge between the previous Schools and Curriculum Development Plan and the draft Education Plan 2020-23. Updates will be provided until a new normal delivery of Education resumes.**

Author of Report: Vivienne Cross (Head of Education, Chief Education Officer)

Background Papers:

Moray Education Service Planning

COVID-19: Responsive, Resilient, Readiness to Improve



RESPONSIVE

Priority Area	What Needs To Happen?	Outcomes	By Whom?	By When?
Supporting Learning at Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication to HTs to prepare packs and online resources Information to learners about Scholar etc including passwords Immediate upskilling of staff where necessary in Glow and other online platforms Support from learning technologist through livestream sessions 	Continued engagement in learning Upskilled practitioners in digital learning platforms and digital confidence Digital learning platforms in use	Vivienne, Karen, Stewart, Alison	27 March
Identification of 'vulnerable learners'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All schools to identify children they deem to be most at risk during the pandemic Data to be held centrally and shared with SW and Education Resources for longer term planning and matching to need 	Risk assessment of vulnerable families completed; vulnerable pupil lists and needs to be met identified Multi-agency cross-referencing	HTs, Lynne, Mhairi	27 March
Update Child Protection guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance to be updated for school holiday period, for use in hubs and ongoing during interrupted learning pattern 	Child protection process reviewed for hub setting and remote learning	Lynne	30 March
Workstream on vulnerable learners, Connect, level 5 and high level need families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plan and guidance to support this from 13 April Guidance re the role of named person Lynne and team to further populate 	Lynne and team to complete	Lynne, Mhairi, Jackie, Jo, Craig, Willem, Helena, Sarah and SW	10 April
Establishment, Rationale and Guidance for Childcare Hubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of SEEMIS virtual school and school admin account Creation of online form and volunteer forms and processing of same Creation of hub volunteers to coordinate rotas, new starts, activity plans etc 	New service was established and operational with a consistent approach across Moray All critical tasks complete as identified to left	Vivienne, Stewart, Karen, Lindsey, Fiona	27 March

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale and operational guidance to be put in place and reviewed on an ongoing nature based on national guidance • Childcare hubs documentation: hub handbook and rationale about me form CP guidance covid-19 cost template lanyard CP card Moray Risk Assessments Operational packs - various documents volunteer lists • Hub handbook includes all guidance and paperwork needed including operational documentation • Update volunteer and child sign up regularly • Ensure returns to SG, ADES, ES and local members as required 	<p>Collation of pupil numbers in each hub including vulnerable children and ASN submitted per Scottish Government reporting, daily (and associated analysis for internal use)</p> <p>Revisions undertaken as necessary including review of Hub Operation Guidance, Risk Assessment, Volunteer staffing and lists, Child placements, returns to Government</p>		
Free School Meals/meals service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up of packed lunch pick up for those on FSM for final week of term 3 at Secondary schools and designated primaries • Hub snacks (am and pm) for Easter holiday period • Hub lunch and snacks from 13 April onwards • Voucher system established for those on Free School Meals • Ongoing review of Free School Meals – eligible children and young people – ensuring equity for all 	<p>Target of 100% uptake from eligibility of Free School Meals (current 5/5/20 – 94% uptake)</p> <p>Fairness and equity for all children and young people in Moray</p>	Catering staff, schools, hub staff and Fiona	16-27 March FSM ‘grab and go’ 13 April onwards – FSM provided including hubs
Opening of hubs and cleaning arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising re cleaning of buildings and appropriate supplies e.g. sanitiser etc • Supply of PPE for first aid/accidents • Ongoing review of cleaning, responding to requirements for enhanced cleaning and building access 	<p>Ensure compliance with COVID-19 guidance re: hygiene, health and safety and public health (Public Health Scotland, NHS)</p>	Rick, Fiona, Neil	From 27 March
IT Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodelling of school ICT laptops with new group policy and associated testing to enable working from home • <i>Access to SEEMiS from home for central and required school staff</i> • Online form for children and young people to access devices • Devices provided to learners based on identified criteria 	<p>Fairness and equity for all children and young people in Moray</p>	ICT Education	Ongoing planning from 13 April

Resilient &...

Recovery

Area To Be Addressed	What Needs To Happen?	Outcomes	By Whom?	By When?
Continued Learning Term 4 Learning Session 2020-2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning for continued learning by schools including any revision to longer term delivery of the curriculum across stages Initial focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing – including IDL - in Primary and across BGE, continuing learning across subject areas in secondary BGE – initially 2 hours per day extending over time in line with national guidance tbc (further cognisant of 22.5 hours maximum teacher contact time, 35 hour maximum working week) Term 4 Guidance; Care and Learning – provides expectations on learning, digital resources support, advice on providing continuity for learners, remote planning format Term 4 Guidance on Hubs and Learning – expectations on hub activities, supporting remote learning and capturing skills Term 4 CYP My Learning Diary Hubs Term 4 CYP My Learning Diary Schools Learning needs to be planned and designed to suit the needs of children and be supported by parents/carers Learning needs to be reinforced and moved on when able to do so Ongoing distribution of learning packs Virtual learning – good practice, BGE/Senior Phase – quality assurance processes, timing, tracking, engagement Completing session 2019 for nursery children Completing session 2019/20 in primary schools Completing session 2019/20 in secondaries for BGE and Senior Phase 	<p>Consolidation of learning across Moray establishments, guided by local authority advice based on National expectations</p> <p>Progression in learning to support transition into new term (4)</p> <p>Accessibility to learning for all Moray learners, ensuring equity of experiences</p>	<p>Schools</p> <p>Education</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondaries – starting session 2020/21 – course offer, virtual learning timetable • Senior phase leavers • Inservice – 14 and 15 May 2020 			
Supporting vulnerable learners - monitoring remote learning and engagement levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches to monitoring to be shared via weekly briefing • Use of Connect processes for those families non-engaging • Consider how to best capture levels of engagement and when to commence gathering this data to ensure progression once schools and ELC restart 	All learners are engaging in learning for positive wellbeing and achievement	HTs Connect Education	Ongoing
Digital Learning Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of digital learning approaches through Glow, MS Teams, Google Classrooms, consortia approaches • Development of guidance/FAQs around use of digital platforms in line with National Advice (including live lesson streaming) • Webinars and training to staff on use of digital solutions 	Digital learning solutions in place and positive levels of engagement reported Progression in learning supported through use of digital learning solutions	Schools Education Learn Tech	Ongoing

Workforce Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised DSM linear formula to be approved by Emergency Cabinet • Nursery management to be planned for with new formulae as removal of this from HTs • Identify excess staff for redeployment under compulsory transfer policy • Identify excess promoted posts as a result of linear formula changes • HTs to consider placing requests and class composition for next session • HTs to discuss staffing requirements with Business Support team • Identify current post vacancies including those in progress (currently paused) and review for progression • Progress posts where necessary • Advertise new post vacancies and undertake associated recruitment and selection processes • Adverts and appointment processes – timeline, processes, virtual • Allocate NQTs once known 	Workforce planning ensures continuity of service and staffing sufficiency	Robin Vivienne Lindsey QIMs	3 July
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider stage partners and supporter for both these groups and support to start new posts virtually Review of recruitment processes – HT and DHT Complete LNCT actions related to workforce planning 			
Enrolments, Placing Requests and Admissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison between officers and HTs to consider accommodating requests HTs to consider support and liaison during times of change 	Continuity of learning experience for children and young people	LS KE HTs	30 April
Workforce Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote use of Time for Talking until end of June Consider OH referrals for staff who are experiencing difficulties Update and promote various online Health and Wellbeing supports to all staff Consider the additional support likely to be required by NQTs from this year next session due to reduced probationary year Consider the additional support required for new NQTs due to reduced ITE year Virtual and telephone meetings (including group and 1:1 sessions with individuals and Associated Schools Groups) in support of school and ELC leaders and their staff Promote Education Psychology offer to staff Support for hub coordinators and volunteers Support for supply teachers (salary average payment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained staff wellbeing and targeted support Continuity for learners, service continuity and supported transition 	Vivienne HTs Lindsey QIMs QIOs	Ongoing
PRD/PU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update outstanding professional update from last session Updated guidance to be shared with HTs and virtual session on changes and/or review of Moray way Consider Glow Form to complete PRD remotely HTs to consider which staff are in PU year and plan to undertake PRD with those as a priority Use of GTCS professional standards HTs to consider either remote VC or telephone call for PRD conversation Officers to complete PRD for all HTs 	Ensure registered teachers are fulfilling national requirements Continuity of service	WS QIMs QIOs	29 May 3 July
Professional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update leadership and management framework Review and update offer for session 20/21 across the leadership and management framework, professional learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional learning offer reflects per Covid position and post Covid needs 	WS	29 May

	courses and NQT programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update digital learning offer as needs develop • Provision of mandatory training on trauma, bereavement and mental health training, nurture (subject to LNCT agreement) • Develop guidance for staff on development work and collegiate time • Develop guidance on working day, pattern and wellbeing • Develop guidance for partner providers around 'training' as part of their contract. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff to have increased confidence in use of digital tools to support curriculum delivery • All staff to have access to professional learning to support vulnerable children and families 	Learn Tech	Ongoing (digital offer)
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Curriculum	<i>BGE:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review planning for curriculum progression embracing the refreshed narrative for CfE • Review entitlements and coverage to ensure all learners continue to progress in the 4 CfE capacities • Curriculum progression review and refresh in light of digital opportunities now presented <i>SQA:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new arrangements and guidance from SQA for Moray for 2020 • Data sets developed to support Quality Assurance of estimates • Collegiate working within and between schools, supporting the development and implementation of guidance through virtual approaches • Regular updates with schools (HTs, SQA Coordinators and as such PTs) to ensure consistent approaches across Moray and sharing practice • Verification activities at subject, school and local authority level as well as incorporating breadth and depth monitoring • Guidance and information for families • Early start to new timetable (session 2020/2021 – 4 May 2020 – to support best outcomes in May 2021 SQA Exam diet for all learners • Continue to review curriculum offer to meet the needs of all learners – wider accreditation options 	Learning progression supported through refreshed national and local authority narrative	Karen Education	May 2020
		Continued focus on raising attainment Widened curriculum offer Progression pathways for all learners	Secondary HTs	June 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Moray College UHI in support of estimates and curriculum offer 			
Communication and Virtual Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTs, SLT and ASGs – method and timing of communication Establishment of weekly HT Meetings during week 1 and 2 of term 4 and as required thereafter to take forward Term 4 arrangements and recovery plans SLT engagement sessions to be considered where necessary to support/challenge individual schools as required Absence and wellbeing Coordination of staff in hubs with focus on continuing learning HT communication with staff Daily briefings to schools prior to and during closure period leading up to Easter Break Weekly google classroom meetings between officers and HTs to establish <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support for learners - support for staff - remote learning experiences Weekly Education Briefing during term 4 with national and local updates and actions required Weekly meetings between HTs/DHTs and teachers, teachers and stage partners to ensure continuity in learning and continued engagement Monthly ELC manager virtual meetings by ASg starting 11 May Hub Coordinator meetings; monthly as follows: Wednesday 29 April Monday 19 May Friday 12 June Wednesday 1 July 	<p>Communication and virtual meetings ensure effective discussion for improvement, dissemination of information and consistency of approaches</p> <p>Connectedness of Moray Education team in supporting schools</p>	HTs Education	Ongoing

READINESS TO IMPROVE

Priority Area	Actions	Page 67	Outcome	By whom?	By When?
Learner Transition					

Transition Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTs/Nursery Managers agree with QIMs/CIOs what transition will look like in each ASG across stages and between sectors HTs to agree staffing HTs to coordinate transition from stage to stage in school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Transition Targeted/Enhanced Transition Learning Transition Pastoral Transition Leaver Transition Agree timing of communication to parents/children linked to transition planning Agree transition for school reopening CIOs/Nursery Managers to consider best way to undertake transition this year working with HTs 	Positive and smooth transition experience and progression to the next stage	HTs Nursery Managers <i>Liaising with:</i> QIMs CIOs	19 June
Nursery Spring Intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider communication with families and recommended remote learning activities Consider who will engage with these families and children from April to Summer Consider how the physical transition will work when setting reopen 	Positive and smooth transition to remote Nursery experience for all children	Nursery Managers CIOs	Ongoing
Nursery to P1 Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EY team to communicate 1140 arrangements to managers/HTs and parents by email Play pedagogy training for nursery and P1 teachers to be completed as well as transition training to be completed by all Universal transition – what would normally be communicated to parents, what activities can be undertaken virtually, how to share home learning to date, how to ensure parents are play based activities to prepare for P1 – what aspects of emerging literacy can be expected for readiness to P1 Targeted – who requires this and how will this be done? Should we consider staggered entry – importance of involving parents Early Learning transition – when should reports be completed? Time to be agreed across all settings and date when reports to parents and to primary schools Agree procedures for other documentation to pass to primary schools eg CP files etc 	Positive and smooth transition from Nursery to P1 for all children	RP HTs CIOs	End of May 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTs to agree P1 staffing and communicate to nursery parents 			
Within primary stages P7-S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary DHT lead on transition to lead this working with Primary HTs – what can be done virtually, meet guidance teacher, tour of school etc Arrangements for curricular transitions – see Tracking and Monitoring Enhanced transition supported at all stages by relevant school personnel supported by central officers 	Positive and smooth transition for all children	HTs SLT Education	Ongoing

Priority Area	Actions	Outcome	By whom?	By When?
Statutory Requirements				
School Improvement Planning, SQR, PEF, NIF, other QI reporting and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority must be given to supporting the recovery of school/ELC communities and particular children, families from the impact of COVID-19 and lockdown and to support remote learning, staff and pupil wellbeing and childcare hubs at this time Current guidance should be updated and reviewed as well as a new section on COVID-19 expectations HTs/managers should consider evidence already gathered from August to March – learning visits, SFF visits, internal QA processes, inspection documentation etc HTs/managers should consider data they have from August to March eg attendance, attainment, exclusions and other data HTs/managers should consider any views they have gathered through feedback, surveys, questionnaires etc. Google forms can gather information during school closure and are easy to set up HTs/Managers should consider planning for equity and excellence – widening groups in Literacy/Numeracy/HWB for individuals and groups due to school closures PEF planning and monitoring delivering equity in the short, medium and long term The role of PEF post COVID-19 and planning 	<p>Planning for improvement and raising standards, improving performance</p> <p>Closing the attainment gap</p> <p>Monitoring emerging gaps and planning for reintegration into school based learning and monitoring progress</p> <p>Working towards achieving anticipate levels across all our schools and stages based on milestones</p>	HTs HoE QIMs QIOs	Ongoing June 2020
Moray Education Quality Assurance and Self Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School QA interactions (virtual visits) – SLT and ASG Self-evaluation processes (SEP, SIP, SQR) and quality assurance Term 1 (2020/2021) focus on QI 3.1 Wellbeing, Equity and 	Improved rigour in school systems for monitoring performance in this aspect	Karen Stewart	Ongoing October 2020

Processes	<p>Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain rigorous mechanisms for record keeping and monitoring all aspects of wellbeing, Equity and Inclusion 	Greater support and challenge in school improvement planning		
Working Time Agreement (WTA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HTs to renegotiate WTAs to end of session, taking account of remote learning, remote professional development and supporting hubs Discussion with LNCT joint secretaries how best to undertake consultation virtually with all teaching staff Agree timescales to support the finalisation of SIP and school calendar Await national advice to be disseminated through LNCT joint secretaries 	Fully operational Working Time Agreement collegiately agreed within SNCT guidance	LS LNCT Education	TBC Ongoing
Transfer of Records and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper and digital turnarounds Transition arrangements for data and wider information 	<p>To ensure continuity in service</p> <p>To ensure effective transitions</p>	HTs Education	3 July
Tracking and monitoring CfE levels – ACEL data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection and monitoring of school internal data e.g. school tracking and monitoring data, BGE and Senior Phase early indication, estimates and attainment data Review of range of assessment evidence for identification of learner progress and achievement Profiling of learning journeys using paper based or electronic capture, cross-referencing to COVID-19 processes eg My Learning Diary Collection and use of attainment data pre, during and post-COVID-19 Moderation across stages, schools, ASGs, Moray wide 	To ensure collection and use of up to date information and data – planning for session 2020/2021	HTs Education	3 July
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conversation with HTs on Reporting based on following key questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What stage are individual schools at? If reports not completed – what should expectations be so teachers can support hubs and remote learning? HTs/managers to moderate reports not yet completed and how these will be issued to parents before the end of the formal school session HTs to consider their sign-off process for reports this session and feedback requests/follow-up procedure on any parental queries 	<p>Guidance developed on reporting in line with national and Trade Union advice</p> <p>Reports issued with any follow-up actions undertaken</p>	HTs Schools Education	3 July

Summer Hub provision planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider coordinator roles Consider partnership input for activities – Active Schools, CLD, Third Sector, etc Consider offering to Cat 1 only Consider how Teacher Volunteers may be supported in Hubs during Summer Write to all key workers to inform them of offer 	Hub Childcare Provision to be maintained for key workers over the extended Summer break	Education LNCT	29 May
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Priority Area	Actions	Outcome	By whom?	By When?
Recovery				
Preparing for Schools reopening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of National and International Research and Advice School and ELC setting Capacities School building readiness for opening Physical and Social Distancing compliance Health and Safety for all including cleaning arrangements Staffing capacity available for work (e.g. shielding, pregnancy) Staged return (which children and when?) for phased re-entry Consideration to lunchtime and break arrangements Staff Expectations – balance of remote learning and school-based learning Transport arrangements (including social distancing measures) Factors for individual groups of children including ASN Childcare provision within schools? 	Schools reopened and adhering to current Government advice	Education	15 June
Hub Provision – Post-August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of provision agreed Targeted groups identified 	Hub provision in place with guidance	Education	3 July

Version Number:	Date:
1	30 March 2020
2	4 May 2020



REPORT TO: EMERGENCY CABINET 21 MAY 2020

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL MONITORING – IMPACT OF RESPONSE TO COVID-19

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Emergency Cabinet of the current estimate of the financial impact of the Council's response to the COVID-19 outbreak, as reported to COSLA on 15 May 2020 for remission to Scottish Government as part of an overview of the estimated impact on Scottish local authorities and to raise other issues which will impact on the Council's finances.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Emergency Cabinet following a decision of Moray Council on 25 March 2020 to temporarily suspend all delegations to committees as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (paragraph 2 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Emergency Cabinet notes:

- (i) **the current estimated financial position for the initial lockdown period; and**
- (ii) **the longer term issues which will impact on the Councils finances.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The response to the COVID-19 outbreak will have significant financial impact on local authorities. COSLA are lobbying for Scottish Government to meet all costs incurred and as part of the on-going dialogue on this subject have agreed a standard template for gathering financial information. This template will be updated and returned fortnightly. It seeks to gather the gross cost of the response. In the first instance estimates were asked from 24 March to 30 June only. It is recognised that reporting cost estimates is an evolving area and that these current best estimates will change. There are also costs which are specifically excluded from the template and these are identified in paragraph 3.13 to 3.17.

- 3.2 The summary costs of Moray's COVID-19 response for that period as reported to COSLA on 15 May 2020 are reported in the table below. The response indicated that there are areas where it is known that there will be additional expenditure but we have insufficient information to estimate that cost at present. It should be noted that Integration Joint Boards (IJB) have been reporting estimated costs through the health board since the onset of the outbreak and the costs reported by local authorities therefore exclude any costs on areas within the IJB remit. The net impact of the figures below is anticipated additional expenditure of £2.2 million during the period 24 March to 30 June 2020.

	Para ref	Total (£'000)	
		Recurring	One Off
Mobilisation costs			
Social Care Costs Outwith Remit of IJBs	3.4	131	0
Housing and Support for Vulnerable People	3.5	415	31
Workforce Costs	3.6	30	110
Non-Workforce Costs	3.7	0	10
Total		576	151
Loss of income and other costs			
Closure of facilities	3.8	1,208	50
Fees and charges	3.9	754	0
Other costs		0	0
Savings delayed	3.10	111	0
Total		2,073	50
Overall total cost & lost income		2,649	201
Reduced costs as a result of COVID-19		612	0

- 3.3 Details of the table above are discussed on a line-by-line basis below.

- 3.4 **Social care costs:** these costs are for children's services. The main anticipated cost (£90,000) is for Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) for key workers children. The cost included is a very high level indicative estimate and will be refined on a monthly basis. It is also anticipated that changing circumstances for carers and looked after children in residential and foster care arising from response to the COVID-19 may result in increased costs. Individual placements are kept under review and the current likely impact is additional cost of £41,000.

- 3.5 **Housing and support costs:** the costs of the various strands of response to food need - provision of vouchers to families entitled to free school meals (net

of savings on the cost of food and other catering supplies); Flexible Food Fund (supporting those financially at risk), Community Food Fund (supporting local community and third sector responses to the vulnerable and marginalised) and food support for shielded people – as currently allocated amounts to £415,000. This cost will be met from the Food Fund. There will be other costs to be met from Moray's Food Fund allocation of £448,000. An amount is being retained in reserve to allow for emerging costs. The cost of PPE for Council's non-social care staff has been included here as a one-off cost - although further purchase of PPE is anticipated, it will be on an irregular pattern – as has the cost of a mailing to shielded people.

- 3.6 **Workforce costs:** are primarily one-off costs of provisions of additional ICT, including the extension of access to the VPN. An estimate of additional staff time has been included to cover extension to Contact Centre hours and the Registrars service. These are high level cost estimates.
- 3.7 **Non-workforce costs:** £10,000 non-recurring cost is the cost from the software provider of modifying NDR bills to show the 1.6% rebate on the rate poundage which SG announced as part of its package of support for business.
- 3.8 The bulk of the cost of the COVID-19 outbreak for the Council is anticipated to be from reduced income. During the lockdown the council will have no income from the closure of its leisure facilities, estimated at £590,000 for the three month period. Lost income from school meals is estimated at £618,000. There are associated cost reductions with both of these – recorded in the next section of the return (see paragraph 3.11). The loan of £50,000 to Moray Leisure Ltd is also included in this section as a one-off cost, although it is anticipated that this will be repaid.
- 3.9 Lost income from waste collection fees and sale of recyclates is estimated at £197,000. Lost car parking income is estimated at £242,000 based on budget. An estimate of £60,000 lost income from roads construction consent is based on budget. Licenses have been given a three month extension and therefore budgeted income for three months (£255,000) is assumed to be foregone. It is known that harbour landings and other harbour income generating activity is reduced but the pattern of harbour activity is complex and cost estimates have not yet been developed and so are not yet included in this section
- 3.10 As the Council concentrates its efforts on critical service to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, some savings approved in the budget will be delayed. The Council approved savings from increased commercialisation of its leisure facilities and clearly this cannot happen during lockdown. £21,000 projected lost income is included. The Council also approved indicative savings of £360,000 from the Improvement and Modernisation Programme and slippage of £90,000 has been assumed for the first quarter.
- 3.11 Reduced costs from four areas have been estimated: savings on catering supplies (£260,000); savings on fuel of inactive vehicles (£51,000); utilities costs for closed facilities (£256,000); reduction in staff travel expenses (£45,000). These are all based on costs incurred in 2019/20 for the first quarter of the year.

- 3.12 Scottish Government has confirmed initial funding for local authorities to cushion the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. Moray's share of the general funding (the hardship fund) is £853,000. The position reported above can be summarised thus:

	£000s
Additional expenditure / loss of income	2,850
Reduction in expenditure	(612)
Net additional cost	2,238
To be met from Food Fund	(415)
Hardship fund allocation	(853)
Estimated net cost to the Council (three months only)	970

- 3.13 In addition to the above cost, the Council will see reduced income from Council Tax and rental from the industrial estate. The immediate impact in terms of cash flow can be estimated. Comparing Council Tax receipts to date with comparable receipts in 2019 suggests a shortfall of around £80,000 a month. That is a reduction of around 2%. Council Tax payers who are in financial difficulty as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown have been encouraged to apply for assistance under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The caseload for Council Tax Reduction (CTR) rose over March and April by around 5%. This would suggest that the reduction in Council Tax receipts for this period is due to CTR rather than a temporary delay in payment. Cash flow will be reduced by £240,000 and that is likely to be lost income rather than delayed income. This is in line with the model used by COSLA to estimate the impact on Council Tax nationally. Debt on industrial premises rose by £90,000 from the end of March 2020 to the end of April 2020. The impact of this is less susceptible to estimation. The actual shortfall for these receipts will be dependent on the length of the lockdown and the impact on the Moray economy and people's individual circumstances. Cash flow for the quarter is likely to be reduced by £300,000.
- 3.14 There will be a further impact on the Council's finances from the COVID-19 outbreak. Scottish Government gave a concession for local authorities to use capital receipts to fund expenditure to bring about service change and make budget savings. This concession is time limited and ends in March 2022. The Council planned to use £2,000,000 capital receipts in 2020 to fund its Improvement and Modernisation Programme. Only emergency property transactions are being processed by the Register of Sasines. Furthermore, the significant capital receipts which the Council budgeted for are likely to be reduced by the impact of COVID-19 on property prices after the outbreak as the economy recovers.
- 3.15 The Council also budgets to capitalise the cost of staff involved in roads construction work and certain capital projects. This cost will become a charge to revenue in 2020/21 for the duration of lockdown. £6 million is budgeted to be charged to capital for the year, mainly from the roads DLO, and around half of that would relate to staff costs. This work is strongly seasonal and an exercise is being carried out between the roads service and the accountancy service to estimate the impact on the General Fund. COSLA are exploring the possibility of mitigation with Audit Scotland, along with the related issue of Housing DLO recharges to the Housing Revenue Account.

- 3.16 There will be further impacts from the current cessation of construction work. These will not all be evident in 2020/21. For example, the delay to the NESS energy from waste plant will require costs to continue to operate the Council's landfill site for longer than estimated. Those costs are currently estimated to be in the order of £300,000, but will not be seen for three years. Contract inflation is also likely to increase the cost of capital works but again this may not show until future years.
- 3.17 Clearly the longer the lockdown lasts the higher the cost for the Council. The financial impact at present remains a fluid estimate. However, it is important to recognise that final costs cannot be extrapolated from the current estimates of cost for 24 March to 30 June. The cost impact is likely to increase proportionately as time goes on.

4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Response to the COVID-19 outbreak is the Council's current priority, with other activities on hold. This inevitably impacts on the Corporate Plan and LOIP.

(b) Policy and Legal

There are no policy and legal issues arising directly from this report.

(c) Financial implications

Financial implications are addressed throughout the report, which indicates a projected gross cost of £2.2 million, which after funding from Scottish Government is taken into account results in a net additional cost to the Council arising from the COVID-19 outbreak of £1 million, plus reduction in Council Tax and Industrial Estates rentals totalling £0.5 million, reduction in capital receipts to fund improvement and modernisation and further impacts arising from the capital programme which are not yet quantified. The impact will extend into future years.

(d) Risk Implications

There are risks to the Council's planned savings noted in the report. The COVID-19 poses risk to the local and national economy which will have wider ramifications for the Council's services.

(e) Staffing Implications

There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

(f) Property

There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There are no equalities issues or impact on the socio-economic duty arising directly from this report.

(h) Consultations

Members of CMT, the Head of Governance, Strategy and Performance and Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report and any comments incorporated in the report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The current estimated financial cost of response to the COVID-19 outbreak by the Council for the period 24 March to 30 June 2020 is estimated at £2.2m. There are areas of known cost not included in this estimate. The current estimate outstrips the funding which has been made available by £1 million.**
- 5.2 Further cost of £0.5 million is being incurred in that period from lost Council Tax income and reduced industrial estate rental.**
- 5.3 In addition to this there will be reduced and delayed capital receipts, and impact on the capital programme which will have revenue consequences.**

Author of Report: Lorraine Paisey, Chief Financial Officer

Background Papers:

Ref:



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL EMERGENCY CABINET 21 MAY 2020

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19 - EARLY RESPONSE AND PLANNING FOR RECOVERY

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the impact on the economy as the result of COVID-19 pandemic, the support announced to date for businesses and employees and the preparations being made to plan for recovery and renewal of the Moray economy.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Emergency Cabinet following a decision of Moray Council on 25 March 2020 to temporarily suspend all delegations to committees as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic (para 2 of the minute refers).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Cabinet consider and note the potential economic implications of COVID-19 on the UK, Scottish and Moray economies based on the latest analysis as well as the local, Scottish and UK responses, and endorses the preparations being made to plan for recovery and renewal of the Moray economy.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 From 18 March to 23 March the UK and Scottish Government announced unprecedented restrictions on activity in the UK. This started with the closing of schools and to date has resulted in legislation ordering most retail, leisure and hospitality businesses to close and guidance instructing all non-essential businesses to close.
- 3.2 All citizens have been instructed to only leave home for food, exercise, medical treatment and where absolutely necessary for essential work, where it is not possible to work from home.
- 3.3 The objectives of these policies are to stop the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus and to prevent the NHS from being overwhelmed.

- 3.4 By imposing these public health measures large sections of the economy have in effect been mothballed with only essential economic activity continuing.
- 3.5 These restrictions were extended for at least another 3 weeks on 16 April 2020, meaning the next review will be on 7 May 2020. This report has been written prior to that review.
- 3.6 Scottish Government published a framework for decision making on 2 April 2020 which highlights that there will be a need for social distancing measures over a prolonged period. The ability to apply social distancing in the workplace will influence whether a business can operate moving forward.

4. ECONOMIC CONTEXT

- 4.1 Recent Analysis from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) and the Scottish Government Office of the Chief Economic Advisor (OCEA) both find broadly similar drops in GDP for the UK (35%) and Scotland (33%) respectively.
- 4.2 The OBR presents a scenario where the sharp drop in GDP of 35% is followed by a sharp rebound when social and economic restrictions are lifted. This is what has been widely referred to as a 'V shaped' recovery. To enable this scenario key assumptions have been made, most importantly that there is no economic scarring from the crisis, which can have multiple forms such as a loss in productive capacity or a larger drop in consumer demand preventing output returning in line with the lifting of restrictions.
- 4.3 The OCEA presents a similar scenario for Scotland with a V shaped recovery however they also include a W shaped recovery where restrictions are reintroduced due to a second wave of infection and a W shaped recovery where productive capacity is damaged. In terms of GDP the V and W shaped recovery the period to pre-crisis levels is shown as recovery within 3 months of each other in early 2022. The scenario with damage to productive capacity does not show full recovery until 2024.
- 4.4 Both scenarios show the fall in unemployment post crisis lagging behind the recovery in GDP. The OBR shows unemployment remaining persistently higher than pre crisis levels of 3.8% until 2023. The OCEA analysis is in line with this showing unemployment returning to 4% in 2023 under both the V and W shaped scenarios. In the Scenario with damage to productive capacity unemployment remains 2% higher than these scenarios recovering to 4% in 2024.
- 4.5 The OCEA provides some analysis on the impact across age and gender, which is in line with analysis from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS). The analysis shows firstly that in sectors that have been shut down a disproportionate number of young people work in them. Those under 25 are most likely to work in a shutdown sector, followed by 26-34 then over 65.
- 4.6 Of those age groups working in a shutdown sector women will be disproportionately affected compared to men. 39% of women under the age of 25 work in a sector that has been shut down compared to 26% of men under

25. This is replicated across all age groups with the exception of 65 and over. Overall, 18% of women work in a shutdown sector compared to 14% of men. Analysis by sector is discussed later however given the shutdown industries tend to be lower paid and will be hit the hardest by the crisis there will be serious implications for the fair work and wellbeing agenda.

- 4.7 IFS analysis shows a similar picture at the UK level with a slightly lower number of under 25s working in these sectors which reflects the differences in Scotland and UK economic makeup. IFS also looks at the earnings of those in shut down sectors. The result is an almost straight line from those on the lowest income decile, where 34% of those workers are employed in a shutdown sector, to the top income decile where 5% are employed in these sectors.
- 4.8 As shut down industries are likely to have suffered the most scarring at the end of the crisis these analyses shows that the young, women and the poorest in society will be the worst affected.
- 4.9 The analysis of the OBR and to an extent the OCEA rely on the economic recovery being V shaped. Analysis from the Fraser of Allander institute shows that this may not be the case for a number of reasons and there is now speculation that recovery will be more hockey stick shaped, with a period when the economy plateaus before growing:
1. For large parts of the economy the activity that has been lost can never be recouped. This is especially true of leisure, tourism and hospitality.
 2. Unemployment takes time to recover and it is a time consuming process to hire employees and there may be skills mismatches. In an area with a buoyant labour market it may recover in a shorter time period however in rural areas that are dominated by a single sector people may be forced to move to areas where the predominant industries have had a smoother recovery.
 3. Supply chains will have been damaged and some businesses will not have survived. This won't become apparent until the economic recovery starts. It will then take time for new business to fill the gaps, and there may be less appetite and finance for business start-ups due to risk.
 4. Household incomes will be less healthy across most income deciles. At the lower end many will have lost their jobs and be reliant on state support with available income being spent on necessities. At the higher end well paid business owners and employees of previously successful businesses will also be affected. These businesses will have received less revenue and less earnings will be available. Individuals savings will therefore have been used and require replenished. Earnings from investments will also be lower. This will all have the effect of lowering disposable income and therefore consumer demand. Many may also have been on only 80% income.
 5. The profit cycle of many businesses has been broken. In normal times profits would be used to reinvest in the business to increase output in the following years. This would drive increases in GDP and potentially create jobs. Businesses will have seen their profits disappear in many cases and

their cash at hand and reserves decrease dramatically which will stifle investment for years to come. Furthermore, banks may tighten lending requirements when borrowing is assessed through a new risk dimension and to shore up their own finances.

6. As this is a global crisis external demand will affect the rebound. The pound has taken a greater hit than other currencies so this may boost exports, however exporters are still vulnerable to global demand.

- 4.10 An additional barrier is that the Oil price has dropped to almost record lows. This would be expected during an economic crisis and increases will help drive recovery, however the situation has been magnified by a supply glut from disagreements between OPEC and Russia. This will affect employment and profitability in Scotland's Oil and Gas sector and this will have significant implications for those living in Moray who work in and support this sector.

5. SECTOR ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Section 4 focused on the analysis of the COVID-19 crisis on the economic performance of the UK and Scottish economies as a whole. This section will look at the component sectors of the economy and how they will be impacted. Given that each region's economy is made up of a different mix of sectors, of varying sizes and with different employment levels this means that some regions will be impacted to a greater extent than others.

- 5.2 In this section the report will put the analysis in a Moray context by looking at the sector and employment breakdown of the region. The table below shows the Moray economy by number of businesses as a % of the total, number of employees as a % of the total and by number of employees per business. It is sorted from largest sector by number of businesses.

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Employees</u>	<u>Employee/business</u>
G : Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	19%	14%	8
F : Construction	15%	6%	4
M : Professional, scientific and technical activities	13%	4%	3
I : Accommodation and food service activities	9%	9%	10
N : Administrative and support service activities	8%	4%	6
C : Manufacturing	8%	17%	23
Q : Human health and social work activities	6%	17%	27
S : Other service activities	4%	2%	5
H : Transportation and storage	3%	4%	13
R : Arts, entertainment and recreation	3%	3%	9
P : Education	3%	9%	33
L : Real estate activities	3%	1%	3
J : Information and communication	2%	1%	5
O : Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	2%	6%	38
K : Financial and insurance activities	2%	1%	6
E : Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1%	1%	10
D : Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.4%	0.5%	12
B : Mining and quarrying	0.4%	0.3%	7

- 5.3 By number of businesses retail, construction, professional, accommodation and food services and manufacturing are the largest in the Moray economy.
- 5.4 By number of employees manufacturing, health, retail and accommodation and food services have the highest concentration of employees.
- 5.5 By number of employees per business public administration, education, health and manufacturing are the largest.
- 5.6 A common industry across all three categories is manufacturing, highlighting its importance to Moray. Retail and accommodation and food services feature in 2 categories, as do health. Professional, scientific and technical services are shown to have a high concentration of businesses, but few employees and an employee per business ratio of 3. Quite often a key sector with this profile could point to many small high value start-ups in the Moray economy.
- 5.7 OBR analysis in the table below shows the component sectors of the economy and their contribution to the forecast 35% drop in GDP.

Sector	Per cent	
	Weight in whole economy value added	Effect on output relative to baseline
Education	5.8	-90
Accommodation and food services	2.8	-85
Construction	6.1	-70
Other services	3.5	-60
Manufacturing	10.2	-55
Wholesale, retail and motor trades	10.5	-50
Information and communication	6.6	-45
Professional, scientific and technical activities	7.6	-40
Administrative and support activities	5.1	-40
Transport and storage	4.2	-35
Mining, energy and water supply	3.4	-20
Real estate	14.0	-20
Public administration and defence	4.9	-20
Financial and insurance services	7.2	-5
Agriculture	0.7	0
Human health and social activities	7.5	50
Whole economy	100.0	-35

- 5.8 The table clearly shows that aside from education 85% of output has stopped in accommodation and food services, 70% in construction, 55% in manufacturing and 50% in wholesale and retail. The sectors hit hardest are the sectors the Moray economy primarily depends on for employment.
- 5.9 OCEA analysis looks at sector exposure to 3 main risk categories, international supply, demand (domestic and international) and labour. It finds that nationally manufacturing is most at risk due to reliance on international supply of materials, export demand and labour market disruption due to social distancing in the workplace. There are 4 other sectors at high risk from 2 of the categories. These are construction, retail and wholesale, accommodation

and food and arts, entertainment and recreation. This is in line with the OBR analysis and the sectors identified here are crucial to the Moray economy.

- 5.10 Research by Context Economics looks at the number of jobs that are at risk by sector. They estimate for Moray that 21.4% of jobs are at risk due to COVID-19. This equates to 9,904 jobs in Moray. They estimate that in construction of residential property 50% of jobs are at risk, in manufacturing 25% and in tourism related businesses between 50 – 75%.
- 5.11 Analysis from the Fraser of Allander institute into the effects on different sectors agrees that manufacturing and construction will be hit harder than services, however accommodation, food services and transport will be the hardest hit.
- 5.12 The Fraser of Allander business monitor survey provides further insight into the effect on business. In all sectors at least 65% of businesses have seen an impact on staff hours, and at least 40% of businesses in all sectors have seen a reduction in staff numbers. For accommodation and food services this rises to 100% and 80% respectively.
- 5.13 The same business monitor also asks firms if they can survive in the current scenario for longer than 3 months. 50% of manufacturing businesses state they cannot, 60% for construction and 75% for accommodation and food services.
- 5.14 In section 4 it was stated that the OBR and OCEA (to some extent) are basing their scenarios on a V shaped recession. In section 4.9 some reasons why this may not be the case were listed. Included in this is the ability to recoup lost income. There are sectors where lost income will never and can never be recovered. In manufacturing a business may be able to increase production to meet latent demand. In accommodation however it is not possible for a hotel to sell more rooms than they have to make up for lost demand. Human behaviour is also an issue. Surveys show that only 30% of the population believe restrictions should begin to be lifted in 3 weeks. Even if the Government does so people may still not go back to work or begin spending.
- 5.15 If a V shaped recession does not occur and there is lasting damage to the economy analysis shows the Moray economy is particularly vulnerable. The tourism industry nationally is expected to be hardest hit. If there is no tourist season this year then these businesses will not have revenue until spring 2021. This will force many into bankruptcy. Rural areas such as Moray are especially exposed to this as there is often no other type of employment available in these areas. This could lead to people having to leave to find work elsewhere. This would be extremely damaging to rural areas and makes the youth attraction and retention ambition even more difficult to achieve.
- 5.16 Manufacturing has been identified as a sector that is particularly at risk. Unlike many other parts of Scotland manufacturing is still the largest component of the Moray economy in terms of number of employees and also one of the largest in terms of the number of employees per business at 23. In Moray there are 260 manufacturing businesses. If 25% of those businesses do not survive the crisis on average 1495 people would be made redundant.

- 5.17 Retail and wholesale by number of businesses is the largest sector in the Moray economy. Many of these businesses rely on the accommodation and food industry for their orders and this industry will be particularly badly hit which will impact their supply chains. This crisis may also change the purchasing habits of consumers with more being done online.
- 5.18 While not one of the largest sectors by number of employees or employees per business 15% of the Moray economy is made up of construction businesses, with a small number of large businesses and many smaller contractor businesses often self-employed. Construction of private housing is forecast to see a drop in activity as demand and credit for both buyer and seller becomes more difficult. This could lead to a large number of small businesses in the sector going out of business.
- 5.19 While not specifically identified in the reports discussed above there are a number of other industries which are significant in the Moray economy which have been significantly impacted including the fisheries and whisky industries. The process for Brexit is a further area of concern. .

STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.20 While the challenges in almost all sectors are not in any way underestimated, the Moray economy does have comparative strengths and as we move into the recovery phase there will be opportunities for innovation and to adapt and improve previous practices. As previously stated tourism is forecast to suffer from one of the biggest drops in activity. It is possible that the type of tourism in Moray may help the industry restart at a greater pace than elsewhere. The industry is not as reliant on tour operators and rail as many other areas, which will find it harder to maintain social distancing, and Moray is well placed to capitalise on individual and family visits. Furthermore the region has an extensive outdoor offering where social distancing can easily be maintained and will be an attractive offering for those looking to staycation.
- 5.21 Moray's Food and Drink manufacturing base has proven resilient during the crisis and many, including Walkers, Baxters and Diageo, have either remained active throughout or been able to resume activity with appropriate measures in place, albeit with reduced productivity. This in turn has helped to keep local supply chains functioning. Being proactive in implementing social distancing measures at this point can benefit other smaller producers as that local knowledge and expertise is passed on. Post crisis the strong food and drink sector could be used to promote a more local economy for products as consumers look to buy local to support their area
- 5.22 Pre COVID-19 retail was moving towards increasing volumes of sales being online and the crisis will accelerate that shift. Support is available to those retailers who wish to move online. This will mean that town centres could see fewer retailers however actions will be developed to enable these town centres to be repurposed and rejuvenated with higher levels of residential accommodation and other changes made for example through town centre master plans.
- 5.23 Moray benefits from the renewed presence and commitment of the Ministry of Defence through RAF Lossiemouth. This has enabled continuing activity in

construction and this will continue post crisis and help to fuel recovery in this sector.

- 5.24 The COVID-19 crisis has provided many parts of the economy with a large scale experiment in home working. If this method of working is adopted more widely post crisis then it will provide opportunities for those who may feel anxious about living in densely populated cities in the future to relocate to rural areas and home work. This could further the youth attraction and retention agenda in Moray. To facilitate this investment in better broadband and mobile in rural areas will be crucial.
- 5.25 Moray's Agricultural sector is an advantage to the region as this industry is not forecast to see any significant decline. The industry will however face a shortage of workers and needs to be supported to maintain production of final demand products such as fruit and vegetables and intermediate demand products such as grain for the food and drink industry,

6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO BUSINESSES

- 6.1 Moray Council, on behalf of the Scottish Government are administering a grant scheme which can award a £10,000 grant to businesses benefiting from the small business bonus scheme (rateable value under £10k) and a grant of £25,000 to businesses in the hospitality, leisure and retail sectors with premises with a value of £18,001 to £51,000.
- 6.2 This scheme has been extended to allow ratepayer who have more than one premises to get a grant of 75% of the grant at section 6.1 for every additional property. The extension will be available from 06/05/2020.
- 6.3 To date 1345 applications have been received and 1117 paid totalling £12.385 million.
- 6.4 The proposed 1.6% increase in non-domestic rates for 2021 has been removed by application of an equivalent discount. In addition all businesses and premises in retail, hospitality and leisure will receive 100% rates relief from 01/04/2020.
- 6.5 Additional support has also been announced by the Scottish Government to support the newly self-employed, creative tourism and hospitality businesses and SMEs.
- 6.6 £34 million has been made available to support the newly self-employed, so those who started trading after 01/04/2019. This is being administered by Local Authorities and payments are now underway.
- 6.7 £20 million has been made available to support creative, tourism and hospitality businesses who were not eligible for the previous rates relief scheme. This will be managed by the enterprise agencies in partnership with Creative Scotland.
- 6.8 £45 million has been made available for SMEs who are in distress due to COVID-19 and are deemed vital to the local and national economy. In Moray this scheme is being managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

- 6.9 The UK wide Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme allows employers to furlough their employees and receive government support of 80% of the employee's salary up to £2,500. The support will be run by HMRC and started accepting applications from 20/04/2020 with a view to the first payments being made 6 working days later. The scheme was open for an initial 3 months, which has now been extended by one month to the end of June with the Chancellor indicating a phased removal thereafter. There is of course the risk that businesses will then make those employees redundant as they may not have the finance to continue paying them.
- 6.10 There is a UK wide Self-employment Support Scheme which will pay a grant of 80% of profits up to £2,500 per month. This will be based on the past three year's average tax returns and whose income has been negatively affected by COVID-19. The scheme will be open for 3 months initially and will open in June. Those who are a limited company and pay themselves dividends are not eligible.
- 6.11 For businesses with an annual turnover of £45 million or less there is the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme which can enable businesses to access loans up to £5 million interest free for up to 12 months.
- 6.12 More information on these schemes, as well as others available such as tax deferral, are available through links at the end of the document. New schemes are still emerging and as this is a moving picture, the intention here is simply to provide a broad overview. Full details are available on the government's [Business Support Finder tool](#).

7. IMPACT ON PUBLIC FINANCE

- 7.1 Public sector finances will be impacted by both the lower level of tax receipts due to the virus and by the spending on supporting the economy.
- 7.2 Public sector net borrowing at the UK level will increase from £47 billion in 2019/2020 to £273 billion in 2020/21. This is the largest single year increase since World War 2.
- 7.3 This will mean public sector net debt will rise from 80.6% of GDP to 94.6% of GDP and remain higher than 80.6% for the years to come. Policy measures to support the economy account for around £100 billion of the extra expenditure.
- 7.4 The implication of this is that public sector debt will be above pre austerity levels and the extra borrowing will need to be repaid unless the UK runs a persistent high net level of debt. If it is to be repaid this will mean higher taxes, public sector expenditure cuts or a mixture of both. On monetary policy, with interest rates so low there is little room for action and issuing further debt to the Government may impact the ability to borrow in the form of UK Gilts in the future if UK debt is too high.
- 7.5 This may mean that the ability of the public sector to provide financial support to the economy post crisis is constrained as funds may be limited.

8. POTENTIAL PUBLIC SECTOR SUPPORT

- 8.1 The Government has provided significant support packages for business and there continue to be changes and additional flexibility provided within these schemes to try to ensure all businesses have access to support. The analysis above demonstrates a disproportionate impact in Moray and consideration will be required as to how as a Local Authority Moray Council could help address this impact moving forward for example through provision of local grants, use of rate change powers and other interventions. The process of planning for this is set out in section 12 below at high level.
- 8.2 In developing its own recovery plan for business continuity the Council will need to consider which services will need additional resource to effectively respond to the changing needs of the local economy and those sections of society that will be hardest hit through this recession period. This report only addresses the economic aspects of recovery but clearly the recovery plan for Moray will also have to address other spheres such as the social, environmental and infrastructure aspects. Work to plan for that wider recovery and renewal process is underway

9. MORAY GROWTH DEAL

- 9.1 The UK and Scottish Governments have announced a £65 million Growth Deal for Moray. Signing the final version of the Heads of Terms to formally agree the projects to be included within the Growth Deal has been delayed due to the Covid-19 lockdown. However, work is continuing to develop Outline Business Cases for projects to be included within the draft Heads of Terms. The aim is to have a shorter period between Heads of Terms and Full Deal and to conclude the Deal as early in 2021 as possible with drawdown of funding thereafter.
- 9.2 The objectives and timing of Growth deal projects are also currently being reviewed to assess whether changes can be made to help support impacted sectors early in the program. One option would be forward funding selected projects deemed essential to recovery ahead of government funding becoming available, but this in turn depends on the council and its deal partners having the financial and staffing capacity to get these projects shovel ready in a shorter timeframe. Another option is lobbying both governments for a shorter deal period over perhaps 5 years rather than 10, to get benefits from projects early and boost spending in the local economy.

10. BUSINESS GATEWAY

- 10.1 Business Gateway Moray is being responsive and reactive to the needs and challenges Moray businesses face due to COVID-19.
- 10.2 They are working closely with Moray Council colleagues and stakeholder partners: Moray Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business, Elgin BID, MoraySpeyside Tourism BID and HIE, to support Moray businesses. The team are committed to help safeguard jobs, livelihoods and businesses, ensuring our approach is a collaborative one which tries to meet business expectations and also their immediate needs.

- 10.3 They have supported several hundred Moray businesses with advice relating to COVID-19, particularly on ways to try and mitigate some of the issues they face at this difficult time. Taking a pragmatic approach by providing tailored 1:1 confidential virtual advice (via email, phone, Skype and Zoom) to SME's, helping with access to financial assistance to help maintain cashflow and secure viable strategies and workable solutions, so they can survive and ultimately thrive.
- 10.4 40 live webinars have been delivered locally and nationally by Business Gateway Moray to 2000 businesses over the last 3 weeks - these have been tailored to meet current business needs and more are being developed to go live over the coming weeks and beyond.

11. MORAY BUSINESS RESILIENCE FORUM

- 11.1 Moray Council are the co-chair along with Highlands and Islands Enterprise of the recently formed Moray Business Resilience Forum. The aim of the forum is to bring to together the Public and Private sectors. This group has a broad membership and meets twice a week. The group also benefits from having the Council Leader, local MSP and local MP as members.
- 11.2 The terms of reference for the group are as follows
1. Provide regular updates on business issues relating to the impact of COVID19 in Moray
 2. Act as a sounding board for the public sector response to the COVID-19 outbreak
 3. Ensure sharing of national information
 4. Handover to the MEP in the recovery phase

12. NEXT STEPS IN RECOVERY PLANNING

- 12.1 In planning for economic recovery the council must ensure that its economic partners such as Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Skills Development Scotland, as well as our residents and businesses agree upon the objectives we are seeking to achieve through the process of recovery and renewal. This will ensure that our efforts are targeted to the right areas. To a large extent, the strategic objectives set out in existing documents such as the Council's Corporate Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, Moray Economic Strategy, Moray Growth Deal and Skills Investment Plan will remain as relevant as they did before the COVID-19 outbreak. The economic landscape while we live with COVID and then move into a period post COVID will have changed however, and this must be recognised in the objectives identified. Equally, any local approach must dovetail with national work ongoing in the area of economic recovery as well as work ongoing regionally through the Grampian Resilience Partnership and the Convention of Highlands and Islands. Clearly however, while being informed and supported by this wider work, the final objectives must be created and agreed locally as the right objectives for Moray given our particular economic makeup.

- 12.2 The process outlined above will move through a number of stages from agreeing objectives to assessing impacts and onwards into action planning and implementation. This work has begun in engagement with Highlands and Islands Enterprise and will be further developed through The Business Resilience Forum, Moray Economic Partnership and the wider Community, Planning Partnership with further reports being submitted to the Emergency Cabinet and through normal reporting channels when these are resumed to ensure that members are engaged and supportive.

13. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

COVID-19 will have serious implications for the delivery of the Corporate Plan, Moray Economic Strategy and the LOIP. This is due to the serious interruption to normal business activity and the inevitable need to refocus some activities to deal with unemployment amongst other issues.

(b) Policy and Legal

None for the purposes of this report.

(c) Financial implications

Although there are no direct financial implications arising from this report. COVID 19 has impacted on the Council's finances and this report highlights there will need to be further interventions to support the economy locally and the potential to reprioritise some services to provide additional support. These decisions will have to be made in the context of the Council's overall fiscal and budgeting processes.

(d) Risk Implications

None

(e) Staffing Implications

None

(f) Property

None

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

There will be a considerable and long lasting social and economic impact from the current crisis and the issues discussed in the report

(h) Consultations

This report has been prepared in discussion with Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Moray Area Team and CMT have been consulted.

14. CONCLUSION

- 14.1 **UK and Scottish GDP is forecast to contract by a third. The future very much depends on the type of recovery we see which is influenced by the length of the lockdown and the level of permanent scarring to the economy. The best case scenario is a V shaped recovery.**

- 14.2 Both the UK and Scottish Governments have offered unprecedented support to the economy but this has come with a large rise in public debt which may need to be paid back. This may constrain the ability of the public sector to support the economy.**
- 14.3 Moray's economy is made up of sectors that are particularly at risk to the crisis such as manufacturing, retail and wholesale and tourism. This may result in higher than average levels of unemployment and a further loss of young people.**
- 14.4 Work is ongoing to ensure that Moray is prepared for the transition from response to recovery and renewal.**

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Date: 6.5.20

Background Papers:

https://cdn.obr.uk/Coronavirus_reference_scenario_commentary.pdf

https://cdn.obr.uk/The_OBRs_coronavirus_analysis.pdf

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/state-economy-april-2020/>

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14795>

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14791>

<https://fraserofallander.org/scottish-economy/scottish-business-monitor-findings-by-sector/>

<https://fraserofallander.org/scottish-economy/looking-to-the-future/>

<https://fraserofallander.org/scottish-economy/coronavirus-quantifying-the-impact-on-the-scottish-economy/>

<https://fraserofallander.org/miscellaneous/global-economy/this-isnt-a-v-shaped-recession/>

<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2020/04/21/covid-19-lockdown-public-want-gradual-exit-priorit>

<https://www.mygov.scot/non-domestic-rates-coronavirus/>

<https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme/>

<https://www.gov.scot/news/lifeline-support-for-business-confirmed/>

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