

ELECTED MEMBER SOUNDING BOARD

Minute of Meeting of the Elected Member Sounding Board held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Monday 29 June 2020 at 11.00am.

Present: Councillors X McDade, P Barrett, A Parrott, J Duff and C Stewart; B Renton, Gold Commander, and S Devlin, Executive Director (Education and Children's Services); Z Robertson, Service Manager, Policy and Commissioning, Health and Social Care Partnership (for Item 3).

Apologies: K Reid, Chief Executive; G Paterson, Chief Officer / Director – Integrated Health and Social Care; K Donaldson, Interim Chief Operating Officer.

In Attendance: S Hendry, Corporate and Democratic Services.

1. NOTE FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The note from the previous meeting of 22 June 2020 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

In response to a query from Councillor Barrett, BR confirmed that she had no further update on the Tay Cities Deal.

In response to a query from Councillor Duff, SD confirmed COSLA were currently in discussion with the Scottish Government regarding the allocation of funding for free school meals.

IT WAS AGREED TO CONSIDER ITEM 3 ON THE AGENDA AT THIS POINT

3. CARE HOMES UPDATE

There was submitted and noted a report by the Chief Officer / Director – Integrated Health and Social Care providing an update on activity within care homes and a summary of the key information and themes reported to the Scottish Government.

In response to a query from Councillor Duff, ZR confirmed that there was no current issue with testing kits expiring and demand was increasing.

Councillor Stewart enquired as to how many care home residents had been discharged from hospital, ZR agreed to look into this in detail. Councillor Stewart enquired about the testing of staff, ZR confirmed that only symptomatic staff were currently tested alongside the use of appropriate PPE. In relation to a question from Councillor Stewart on manufacturing, ZR confirmed that there were two types of test kits delivered to care homes, Randox test kits and all other types which are collectively referred to as non-Randox test kits.

In relation to a query from Councillor Parrott, ZR confirmed that risk assessments were currently being undertaken in relation to the recent announcement by the Scottish Government about family visiting care homes.

2. OPERATIONAL UPDATE

- BR advised that playparks were now open.
- Guidance had been issued on Friday to businesses in Perth and Kinross on re-opening week commencing 29 June 2020.
- The registering of births and marriages were also now able to take place by appointment at 3-5 High Street.
- The public toilets in Pitlochry were due to open on 3 July 2020, further work was taking place to look at the possibility of this also happening in other locations.
- In relation to governance, due to challenges in finding suitable dates for the Recovery and Renewal MOWG, sounding board members were asked to again consider rotating with the usual Monday morning slot for sounding board meetings. It was noted that virtual pre-agenda meetings with Conveners and Vice-Conveners would be re-introduced for committee meetings taking place after 17 August 2020 as per previous practice. A further protocol for virtual committee meetings was currently being looked at that would look at current standing orders, training for members, the use of MS Teams invitations, procedural notes for members, as well as the length of agendas and meetings and use of regular breaks.

In response to a query from Councillor McDade on whether public toilets could also be opened in places such as Comrie and Dunkeld, BR confirmed that work was taking place on a paper that would examine all these issues, including any costs that could be re-claimed for any additional cleaning. Following a query by Councillor Duff, BR confirmed that work was taking place on repairs to the Aberfeldy public toilets.

In response to a query from Councillor McDade on whether hybrid meetings could soon take place in the Council Chambers, BR confirmed that IT were investigating this.

Councillor Stewart noted his views on a lack of progress on the potential for hybrid meetings, connection issues for virtual meetings, and suggested using public libraries and more local council offices to allow members to connect to the network for meetings. BR confirmed that IT and Legal and Governance Services were looking into these areas.

Both Councillors McDade and Stewart noted their concerns that the unaudited annual accounts were being submitted to the external auditors prior to formal consideration by elected members. BR confirmed that the unaudited accounts would be considered at a special meeting of the Audit Committee on 22 July 2020.

Following a suggestion by both Councillors McDade and Barrett that the further consideration by Council of the report on the use of 1-5 High St,

Perth should be taken in public with any private documents attached as appendices to a public report, BR confirmed that this would be looked into but reminded members of the issue of commercial sensitivity.

- SD made reference to the announcement by the Deputy First Minister on 23 June 2020 providing a further update on schools returning in August. A meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff on 23 June had agreed that the end date of school year 2020/21 be brought forward by one week to take account of the later start at the beginning of the school year. The 10 and 11 August 2020 would now be in-service days in Perth and Kinross, and there would be a phased approach to schools returning the rest of that week, with an expectation that schools would be operating full time by week commencing 17 August. This was all conditional on whether there were any further changes by the Scottish Government based on the current health advice at the end of July.

Following a query by Councillor McDade, SD confirmed that in relation to the funding for the additional 1140 hours in nursery settings, it was expected that revised guidance on early learning and childcare was expected in mid-July. PKC had received funding as per its expansion plan.

4. EMERGENCY POWERS – RECORD OF DECISIONS

There was submitted and noted the record of decisions taken under emergency powers as of 29 June 2020.

Both Councillors Duff and Stewart commented on whether the decision to re-introduce parking charges had been taken too early, and Councillor Stewart suggested that further consultation should have taken place with sounding board members prior to the decision. BR agreed to feed this back to Gold Command.

5. LATEST GUIDANCE / LEGISLATION CONSIDERED BY GOLD COMMAND

There was submitted and noted the latest guidance / legislation considered by Gold Command as of 29 June 2020.

6. LG COVID-19 DASHBOARD SUMMARY

There was submitted and noted the latest statistics as of week ending 26 June 2020.

In response to a query from Councillor Barrett in relation to the trends for adult protection referrals, SD agreed to follow this up with Gordon Paterson and Jacque Pepper for further information.

Following a query by Councillor McDade on the trend in relation to child protection registrations, SD provided reassurance but agreed to provide more detailed information.

7. MEMBERS Q AND A

- (i) Councillor Duff enquired about the Spaces for People bid update, BR agreed to look into this further.
- (ii) BR agreed to check the timings of the Recovery and Renewal public survey going online following a query by Councillor Stewart.