

Elected Members Briefing



13 May 2020

Introduction

Welcome to the latest Elected Members Bulletin, compiled each week by COSLA to cover issues related to COVID-19. As well as the bulletin, you will also find information and resources via COSLA's social media platforms, with the **COSLA Facebook** page and **COSLA Twitter** feed updated on a regular basis. The **KHub** for Elected Members is also added to daily.

The **COSLA website** has recently been relaunched with a new look and new content and we would encourage you to visit this and familiarise yourself with it.

The number of cases and the risk level is updated regularly on the **Scottish Government Website** and **NHS Inform** continues to be the source of up to date public health information. All Scottish Government COVID-19 related guidance can be found on **their website**.

Help and support for those experiencing domestic abuse is available at **<https://sdafmh.org.uk>** The helpline number is **0800 027 1234**.

Key Messages

The Scottish Government announced last Thursday that the lockdown will continue, with a slight change on the advice for outdoor exercise effective from yesterday. People can now go outside more than once a day to exercise, but it should still be undertaken close to home. Those heading out to exercise should still either go alone or with members of the same household. The change does not permit people to meet with others from different households, to gather in groups or to go outside to relax. More information is available on the **Scottish Government's news page**.

Work is ongoing between COSLA and the Scottish Government to ensure Local Government priorities are taken into account as the Scottish Government again tests the framework released by the First Minister a fortnight ago, and **the second document that augmented** it.



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Key Messages continued

The COVID-19 Emergency Bill 2 was introduced to the Scottish Parliament yesterday, and will be debated this week and early next week. Further details can be found [online](#).

A [National Wellbeing Hub](#) for the health and social care workforce, which will act as a 'front door' to the wide range of support and wellbeing resources available in Scotland, has been launched. The Hub has been developed by PRoMIS, a collaborative project between NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde's Anchor Service and NHS Lothian's Rivers Centre, with partners across health and social care. It is a resource for the whole workforce, including unpaid carers, volunteers deployed within health and social care services, and their families.

Finance

Following agreement from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance that Councils would get every penny of the £155m Local Government consequentials, a recommendation on distribution will be made to Leaders on Friday.

In relation to Health consequentials, £50m will be released this week for the health and social care response to COVID-19. This will support the immediate challenges in the social care sector. Work is continuing on the detail of the overall Mobilisation Plans to agree the future allocations to fund the additional costs.

The first return of the cost collection exercise has been completed and shared with Leaders. The net additional cost to Local Government of dealing with COVID-19 from late March to end of June is estimated to be circa £250m so far. This information will be collected regularly and used to inform discussions with Scottish Government.

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Workforce

COSLA through its Workforce Issues Group continues to work closely with the SJC and SNCT Unions to understand and help address concerns during the COVID-19 response.

This has included developing a suite of **FAQs to support managers and employees** in carrying out their roles safely and this week updated guidance for those in Education Hub settings will be added. Colleagues in SPDS have developed a **knowledge hub site for wellbeing supports** available to all employees.

Business Gateway

Business Gateway is sharing new business resources daily via a dedicated **COVID-19 support hub**. This includes free advice and guidance on a range of themes critical to business survival of the current pandemic. There are video tutorials, national and local webinars, expert-led checklists and guides covering topics including selling online, how to furlough employees, business contingency planning, what to communicate to customers and structuring your finances through COVID-19.

A number of development projects are also underway to help the delivery and reporting of virtual services by Scottish Local Authorities to support businesses.

Trading Standards

Trading Standards Scotland is part of COSLA and in **the latest edition of their Scam Share bulletin**, they look at some of the most recent scams which have been reported by consumers across Scotland, including those related to the COVID-19 outbreak. There is some very useful information for local communities, covering issues such as scams, travel cancellations and counterfeit goods.

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Media and Communications

COSLA's media and communications department continues to issue proactive press, as well as respond to a range of enquiries from journalists. Over the past week, releases and statements have been issued regarding the Scottish Government's announcements on the consequential for Local Government and the appointments of Cllrs Jacqueline Cameron and Julie Bell to the Board of Public Health Scotland. We have also reported on the roll-out of the Connecting Scotland programme. This programme will offer an internet connection, training and support, and a laptop or tablet to vulnerable people who are not already online during the response to COVID-19. The team has also handled a variety of enquiries from journalists on issues such as waste, fly-tipping and the reopening of recycling centres.

The **#CouncilsCare** social media campaign continues to do well on Facebook and Twitter, and shares as well as suggestions would be very welcome. COSLA'S communications team has also created a Local Government workforce Twibbon. To add it, all you have to do is sign in to your Twitter account, visit the **Twibbon website** and click 'Show My Support Now'.

Along with Councils, COSLA is planning the next communications approach to increase recognition of the work of Local Government in Scotland.

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Thank You

The Local Government workforce and partners across sectors are working hard to support our communities. Further briefings will be issued, however our social media channels, **KHub** and **website** will be continually updated.

If you or your officers require any clarity from COSLA officers on policy matters, please contact the team in the usual way. If you are not sure who to direct your email to, please contact COSLA member support: **membersupport@cosla.gov.uk**

Thank you all for your efforts during this challenging time.



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