
Report To:	Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee	Date:	19 May 2020
Report By:	Chief Executive	Report No:	LP/060/20
Contact Officer:	Aubrey Fawcett	Contact No:	01475 712701
Subject:	COVID-19 (Coronavirus): Scrutiny Report		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report updates the Sub-Committee on actions taken by officers of the Council in order to address and mitigate the risks arising from the COVID-19 emergency.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 As approved at the Executive Sub-Committee's previous meeting, this report ensures there is Elected Member oversight and scrutiny of all actions implemented by officers in the COVID-19 emergency. Officers have taken actions based upon the principles that essential services continue to be delivered to the public, wherever possible, and the core business of the Council is maintained with key regard to the safety of its workforce.
- 2.2 The Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 24 March 2020 authorised the suspension of all Council, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings for the duration of the emergency and delegated full powers in the emergency to this Executive Sub-Committee. This report ensures that Members have clear oversight of all actions taken by relevant officers and with particular regard to service impact.
- 2.3 The items in the **Appendix 1** are updates of actions taken since the previous meeting and are detailed for Member scrutiny. The Executive Sub-Committee will wish to review the appendix for the strategic direction taken in response to the emergency and also for their assessment of how the operational aims of maintaining crucial public services whilst safeguarding the workforce were achieved. The log of actions is indicative of the position on Wednesday 13 May 2020.
- 2.4 Reports in this format with relevant updates are being made to each meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Sub-Committee:

- 3.1 note the actions taken to date to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 emergency in Inverclyde;
- 3.2 note that further reports will be submitted regularly for Members' scrutiny and review; and
- 3.3 approve the ICT investment set out in paragraph 5.24.

Aubrey Fawcett
Chief Executive

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council and its partners have been working to implement arrangements to deal with the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These arrangements are based upon an established corporate and incident response structure. Staff are able, by virtue of their roles and responsibilities, to deal with the emergency and it is recognised that the challenges posed by the current circumstances are profound and will require a continuous process of planning and preparation until its conclusion.
- 4.2 Internal and external communications, all decision-making by officers and the response arrangements are already firmly established through existing strategic and tactical meeting structures. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) is responsible for the strategic response and the tactical arrangements are discussed and proposed through the Council's Resilience Management Team (CRMT) (which also incorporates the Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership (H&SCP)). Additionally, the HSCP has activated its Local Management Resilience Team (LMRT) in which the Council has a number of representatives and this ensures that the Council and the HSCP are entirely joined up in decision-making. From a multi-agency perspective, the LMRT contributes to a Greater Glasgow & Clyde Health Board-wide gold command structure which covers acute, primary and social care. The Council is meeting weekly with multi-agency partners through the West Local Resilience Partnership (WLRP). At a strategic level LRP is also now operating at the level of the Health Board and this incorporates the six constituent Councils and appropriate multi-agency partners.

5.0 CURRENT ISSUES

- 5.1 The decisions noted in Appendix 1 have been taken by the CMT on the basis of tactical updates provided by the CRMT and, also, assessment by the relative Corporate Directors and their teams. Notwithstanding the developing situation, a clear audit trail of all decisions has been maintained with relevant but brief, focused backing papers being circulated for consideration and decision at the CMT daily meetings.
- 5.2 In addition to the daily briefings which have been immediately implemented by the CMT to ensure that all Members of the Council had advance notice of any service impact decisions, there continues to be constant dialogue and contact with relevant Conveners and, where appropriate, Minority Group spokespersons/contacts on key issues.
- 5.3 It has to be noted that there continues to be many operational demands on the Council by reason of the emergency, but as the situation to an extent stabilises in part in relation to workforce issues, it is the intention to continue to report in this format to the Executive Sub-Committee for purposes of scrutiny and review of all decisions taken but it can also be anticipated that the more usual format and content of the Council's reporting to Members will be resumed (albeit for the duration of the emergency to this Sub-Committee).
- 5.4 Although a significant number of decisions have been taken across the range of Council services, the following key issues are identified and summarised as ongoing items for Members' information and for future business-planning:

HSCP

- 5.5 **PPE:** The continuous community transmission of COVID19 has resulted in a challenging position nationally in relation to the provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Health & Social Care staff within the community as well as the provision of PPE to commissioned care services e.g. residential care homes, support providers and carers/personal assistants.
- 5.6 Inverclyde HSCP has been in the fortunate position in maintaining a robust supply of fluid resistant masks, disposable gloves, disposable aprons and eye protection as advised by Public Health Scotland for managing COVID19 with community health & social care settings.

- 5.7 The HSCP sources PPE through two main supply chains, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS supplies for health care as well as National Services Scotland for social care provision. Where there has been pressure on deliveries on individual items of PPE, the HSCP has been proactive in sourcing this directly from the supplier/stores.
- 5.8 The HSCP in line with National guidance has established a PPE Supply Hub at the Fitzgerald Centre for social care providers, commissioned services, care homes, carers and personal assistants where they locally obtain a supply of PPE when their normal supply chain has been unable to deliver PPE to them.
- 5.9 **Testing:** A COVID19 drive through testing centre has been established at Port Glasgow Health Centre Health for Health & Social care staff and commissioned social care providers process which allows staff members to self-refer for testing or members of their family where they are self-isolating.
- 5.10 As per Scottish Government guidelines COVID19 testing for Residential and Nursing Care Homes has been established to test symptomatic residents via their GP and via Port Glasgow test centre for symptomatic staff. In addition to this from 7 May 2020 testing of non-symptomatic staff and residents will take place within individual residential and nursing care homes and will be undertaken by the outreach testing service. This will be coordinated from the Port Glasgow testing site.
- 5.11 Care homes who do not wish for large numbers of staff to enter the premises and have been carrying out their own tests with support from the HSCP Care Home Liaison Nurses where requested.
- 5.12 The Inverclyde HSCP COVID19 Assessment centre opened on Monday 30 March 2020. This is based at Wing H and I of the Greenock Health centre. This was in response to the National UK / Scotland wide COVID19 assessment requirements and was part of the Greater Glasgow and Clyde response. Inverclyde was the 2nd centre to open after GGC Barr Street HUB.
- 5.13 Inverclyde COVID19 Assessment Centre is open Monday to Friday 9-5pm with capacity to see 20 symptomatic patients per day. Patient transport is available for the afternoon slots.
- 5.14 On site Pharmacy allows patients to be assessed and receive prescription treatment packages for continued home isolation.
- 5.15 Service feedback from GP and service users has been positive with statements of a well-coordinated, clean and efficient service that puts patient at ease. Staff have access to the appropriate level of PPE required. The Assessment team are adopting health education on Covid19 as well as safe clinical rapid assessment of respiratory symptoms in the primary care provision and appropriate onward referrals to hospital.

Education and Communities

- 5.16 **Hubs:** Attendance at the hubs continues to increase. The full figures are attached in **Appendix 2**. All secondary school buildings are now open for key staff and tasks (such as SQA and moderation if required) and primary schools that are not being used as hubs will undergo enhanced cleaning over the next week so that key staff can access classrooms and offices if required. All school buildings can currently be accessed by appointment if necessary.
- 5.17 **Educational Recovery Plan:** Groups have been set up to inform the educational recovery plan and the different groups will link in with national guidance, ADES and the Regional improvement Collaborative. The sub groups have representations from heads of establishments, the educational psychology team as well as links with finance and HR. They educational groups are made up as follows:

- Secondary Curriculum

- Primary Curriculum
- Early Learning and Childcare
- Resources
- ASN and Health and Wellbeing
- Digital literacy

5.18 The chairs of the groups link up through the directorate management team. As well as the sub groups, engagement is taking place with the chairs of parent councils and the youth parliament. Ongoing union engagement will take place through regular meetings and also the LNCT. The first WebEx Heads of establishment meeting was held last week.

5.19 **Communities and Libraries:** CLD continue to work in a strong partnership with CVS and colleagues across the Council to support the Humanitarian Assistance Centre and Shielding Line. Within the libraries service, It has been possible to maintain some public services electronically – eBook and eAudiobook borrowing (via Borrowbox), Bookbug and Crafternoon sessions (via Facebook) and an online bookgroup (via Twitter). Stock selection is continuing with heavy slant to e-resources. Young People’s Services team is working with national partners on developing an online Summer Reading Challenge, as well as ‘Reading for Pleasure’ support for schools, and work continues with Attainment Challenge partners on supporting families in the community. Regular social media updates are being produced and all communications channels are being monitored for enquiries.

Environment, Regeneration and Resources

5.20 **Financial Implications:** Along with the other 31 Councils the Council submitted a return to CoSLA estimating the extra costs incurred between mid-March to the end of June arising from COVID. The purpose of this is to demonstrate to the Scottish Government that the £155million consequential for Local Government is required. The Council return (ex-IJB) net of estimated cost reductions and the extra funding already announced came to £1.6million. Members should note that the actual costs will significantly exceed this as the figures submitted were to only run to 30 June and were to exclude items such as Council Tax income drop off or increases in Council Tax Reduction applications.

5.21 **Business Grants:** 640 Business Grants totalling £7.15 million for the initial Grant Scheme have now been paid out with the team liaising with applicants regarding a further 180 applications. Phase 2 of the scheme which relates to ratepayers with multiple qualifying properties was launched on the 5 May. To date 47 applications have been received with first grants paid 18 May.

5.22 **Registrars:** As reported to the last Sub-Committee the number of registered deaths is reducing to nearer the levels experienced last year. As at 10 May the 103 deaths had been registered within Inverclyde where COVID-19 was the only factor or a factor on the Death Certificate. Work with colleagues in the Health Board and Public Health Scotland continues and a report is planned to be brought back on this matter to the next Sub-Committee meeting.

5.23 **School Transport Providers:** Members asked for an update on the May payments for School Transport providers which will cover the month of April. All providers have supplied the necessary financial information and will be paid 100% of the sum due for live contracts. An update on proposed payments for the months of May and June will be presented to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

5.24 **ICT:** The CMT have considered a report regarding the initial increased ICT investment required to continue to deliver the new ways of working developed over the last 2 months. There is a requirement to purchase 355 lap tops over and above those budgeted for in the Capital Programme and to roll-out Web –Ex as the Councils corporate Video Conferencing facility. The costs are set out in paragraph 7.1 and Members are asked to approve the investment in order that orders can be placed asap due to the long lead in times for delivery.

6.0 HORIZON SCANNING

6.1 There are continuing issues that require to be dealt with at the present time.

6.2 **Workforce issues:** The issues in terms of workforce availability and confidence are crucial. Officers from Organisational Development, Policy & Communications are in contact with COSLA colleagues relative to workforce statistics, illness/absence rates, working from home, etc. This information is being collated at a national level and is helping to inform discussions between senior leaders in SOLACE, COSLA and the Scottish Government regarding the impact of COVID-19 on service provision, and the key staffing issues that require some form of national consideration.

6.3 **Employee attendance:** Information is being gathered on a daily basis by managers across the Council. This allows managers to assess resource implications for delivering essential services and also to maintain contact and support those unable to attend work.

6.4 The table below provides approximate absence levels council wide and within some of our key essential service areas, as at 12 May 2020:-

Council													
Historic average absence rate (%) (Pre Covid-19 to give a baseline comparator.)	4.3%												
Absence rate on 12 May 2020 (%) (This includes all those employees reporting sick, those isolating, those absent with caring responsibilities and those non-essential employees at home unable to work from home). Please note that this excludes employees working from home.	<table> <tr> <td>Council Wide</td> <td>17.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Essential Services Breakdown (% of Service Area)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Home Care</td> <td>19.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other HSCP</td> <td>14.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Waste Management</td> <td>24.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Facilities</td> <td>26.1%</td> </tr> </table>	Council Wide	17.5%	Essential Services Breakdown (% of Service Area)		Home Care	19.2%	Other HSCP	14.2%	Waste Management	24.3%	Facilities	26.1%
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Waste Management	24.3%												
Facilities	26.1%												

6.5 The table below provides a comparison of absence levels across the Council over the past few weeks which have been reported to this Committee (the breakdown of absence levels amongst essential services is not available for the 1st and 14th April dates):

	01.04.20	14.04.20	28.04.20	12.05.20
Council	19.0%	19.3%	18.5%	17.5%
Home Care	N/A	N/A	27.3%	19.2%
Other HSCP	N/A	N/A	21.87%	14.2%
Waste Mgt	N/A	N/A	29.5%	24.3%
Facilities	N/A	N/A	23.0%	26.1%

6.6 From this, the Executive Sub-Committee should note that it is essential for all officers to focus all efforts and available resources on addressing the Council's response to the emergency and, for that key reason, the support of all Members is requested in circumstances where the expectations of routine enquiries or normal timescales for operational response to Councillors cannot be met. The emergency will involve delays to otherwise usual Council business and recognition of this impact is needed and officers will, of course, continue to focus service support on the vulnerable in the community.

6.7 **Shielding:** An up to date breakdown of contacts made with both those on the Shielding list and the wider "flu list" of vulnerable people served by the national helpline will be circulated prior to the meeting. There are currently over 3,000 people on the Shielding list for Inverclyde and we are working through contact with those we have been unable to speak to thus far. This has involved issuing letters, visiting and checking other systems. We are benchmarking

this against the approach taken by other local authorities. The Shielding team continue to work with CVS Inverclyde and other partners on delivering services to the Shielding group. Processes are developing well although there have been issues over recent weekends with failures in the national food delivery system which have necessitated additional Council support.

- 6.8 There are a number of developments around this which members need to be aware of. The Scottish Government is currently assessing the long term need for Shielding support however it is likely that this will continue for months or in the worst case well over a year. Local authorities are also being asked to use the Shielding processes to support those told to isolate under the “Test, Trace, Isolate & Support” process. Indications are that this might be for up to two years. A detailed report will be brought to the next meeting on the likely long term implications.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Capital Programme	ICT	20/21	£163,000		Fund from SG COVID Monies. Cost of 355 laptops (55 for schools and 300 for Corporate use)

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
ICT	Software Maintenance	20/21	£12,000		Fund from SG COVID Monies. Based on 100 Web Ex Hosts

7.2 Legal

There are no Legal implications other than as noted within this report.

7.3 Human Resources

There are no Human Resources implications other than as noted within this report.

7.4 Equalities

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

7.5 Repopulation

All of the steps undertaken by Officers seek to support the long-term interests of the Inverclyde economy and to provide a secure and safe environment for its workforce.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The Corporate Management Team endorses this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None

Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee
Weekly Update on Operational Decision Log
From Thursday 30 April 2020 to Wednesday 6 May 2020

Head of Legal & Property Services
GM/KB
6 May 2020

Service Impact	Reason	Reported to CMT	Supporting Report Yes – N/A	Implemented	Officer
Environment, Regeneration & Resources Directorate					

Legal & Property Services

48. Impact on construction supplier payments and future construction project pipeline.	To ensure payment performance for construction-related contracts and to plan for future projects when restrictions lift. 1. Response to Minister for Local Government etc. approved; 2. Temporary increase in procurement threshold changes approved – single supplier threshold £5k and email quotes £25k; and, 3. Review of financial checks for future tendering procedures to be undertaken with a report back to CMT	Yes	Yes	5.05.20	GM
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Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee

Weekly Update on Operational Decision Log

From Thursday 7 May 2020 to Wednesday 13 May 2020

Head of Legal & Property Services

GM/KB

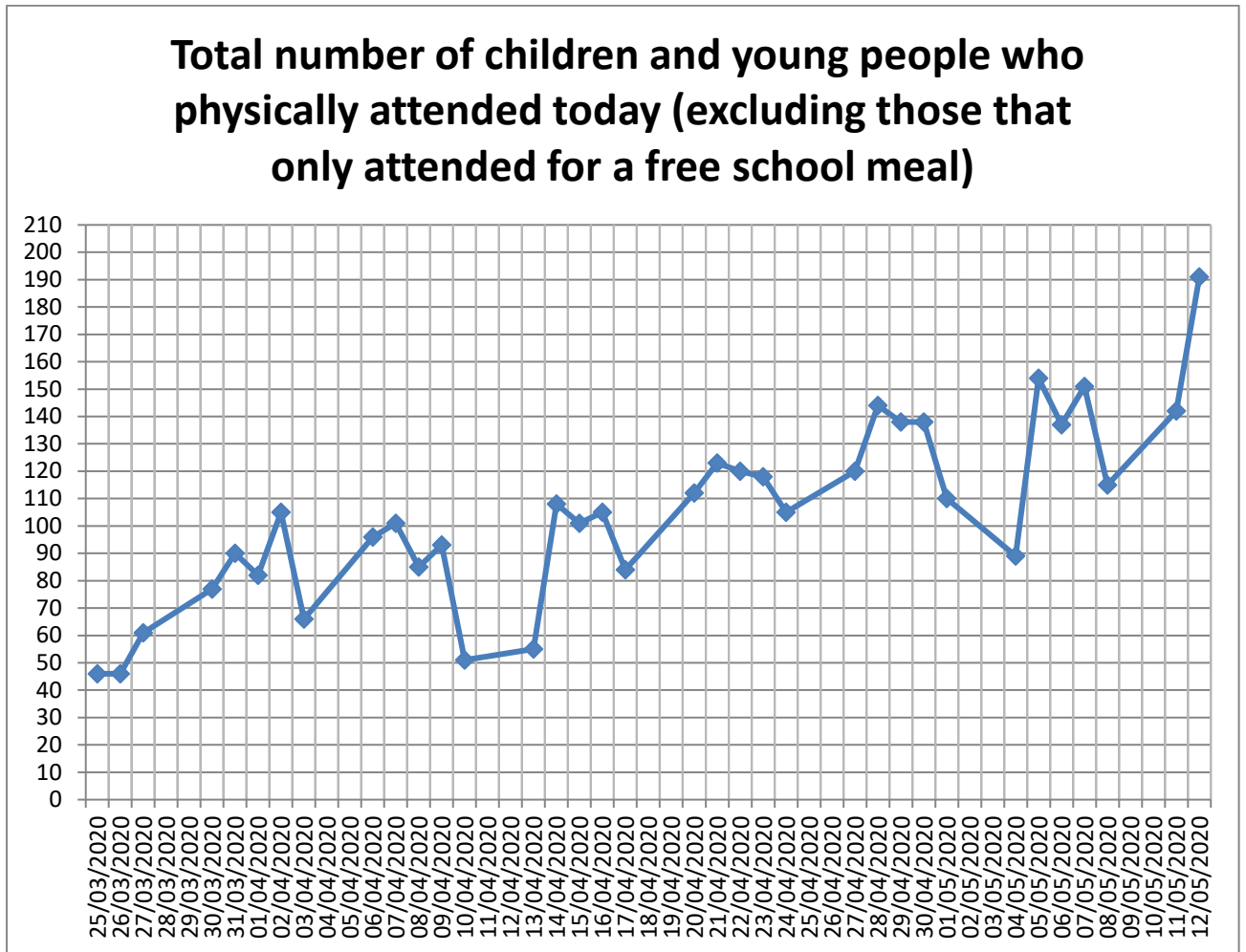
13 May 2020

Service Impact	Reason	Reported to CMT	Supporting Report Yes – N/A	Implemented	Officer
Environment, Regeneration & Resources Directorate					
<u>Environmental & Public Protection</u>					
49. Resume separate Food Waste collection.	To restore service provision at the earliest opportunity (18 May 2020) for Food Waste collection and to assist recycling strategy.	Yes	N/A	11.05.20	GMacF
50. Resume usual 1 hourly crematorium appointment schedule	To reflect reducing demand on emergency service provision and restore normal working practice as from 18.05.20	Yes	N/A	13.05.20	GMacF
51. Resume ground maintenance on a prioritised basis as from 18.05.20	To restore service provision and to protect condition of land assets.	Corporate Director ER&R	N/A	13.05.20	GMacF

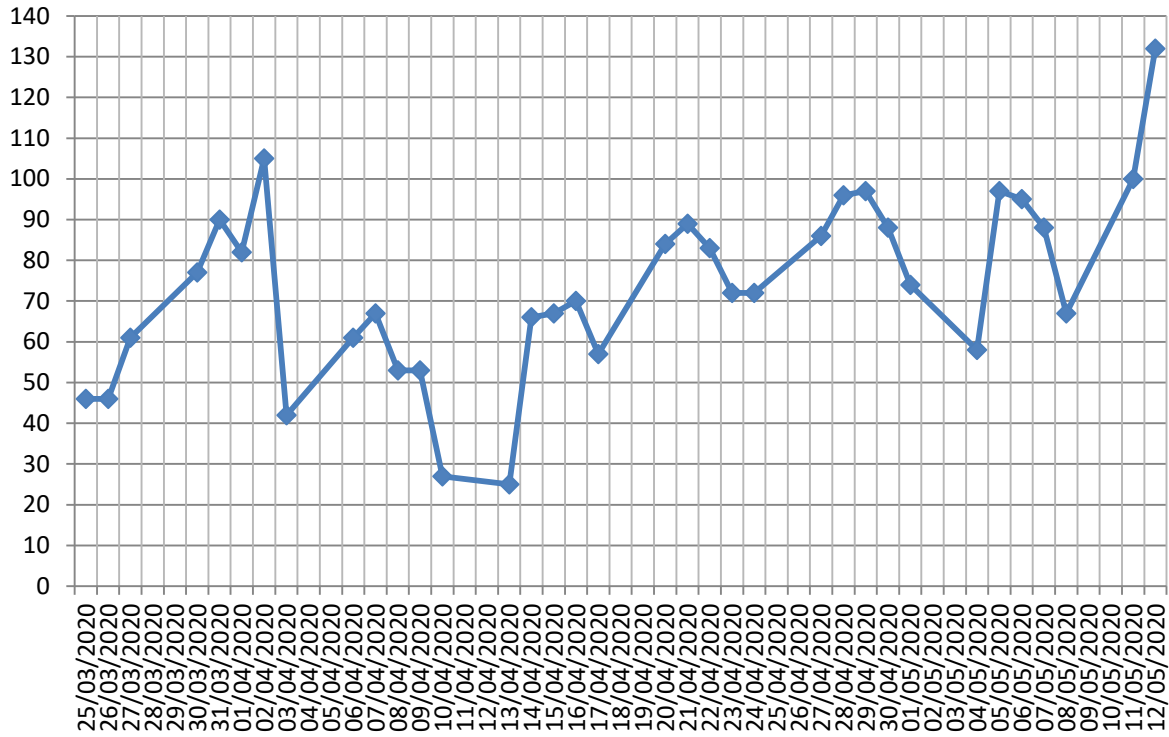
<u>Legal & Property Services</u>					
52. Taxi/Private Hire Car Licences: allow temporary cessation upon requests in writing from the licence holder.	To assist with any possible minimisation of operating costs and complement alternative DVLA Statutory Off Road Notification procedure.	CE	N/A	7.05.20	GM
53. Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry - Request extension for section 21 Notice completion (Langlands Park School, Port Glasgow).	Additional time for research is needed because of COVID-19 impact on: (a) access to and inspection of records held by other parties; and, (b) the organisational capacity of others, as already and separately declared to the Inquiry, to be able to prioritise access to key information and documentation.	Yes	Yes	7.05.20	GM

APPENDIX 2

Attendance at Childcare Hubs up to 12 May 2020



Number whom were children of key workers who physically attended today



Number of vulnerable children and young people who physically attended today

