
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	10 June 2021
Report By:	Interim Service Director Environment and Economic Recovery	Report No:	IC/06/21/MM
Contact Officer:	Martin McNab	Contact No:	01475 714246
Subject:	COVID-19 Update		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Council on actions taken to mitigate the risks around the Covid-19 outbreak.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report updates members on a number of specific areas of work in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic including the vaccination strategy. It does not cover all service related issues, for example education delivery, as the majority of these will be reported through the appropriate service committee. Action logs for decisions made on service delivery will also be reported through the appropriate service committees.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That members note the actions taken to date to mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 outbreak in Inverclyde.
- 3.2 That members note the Local Government Overview Report 2021.

Martin McNab
Head of Public Protection & Covid Recovery

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Since the last update to Council on 22nd April the overall rate in Inverclyde to a low of just over 1 case per 100k on the 6th May. Since then however the impact of the “Indian” variant has taken effect in Inverclyde. At the time of writing the rate stands at 32 cases per 100K. This still compares favourably with the Scottish rate of 66 and the average GGC rate of 115. As members will be aware this is a fast developing situation and a verbal update will be given on the case numbers at the time of the meeting.
- 4.2 The vaccination programme has continued to roll out with the majority of vaccinations given since the last update being second doses. The emphasis is expected to shift over the next few weeks to the delivery of first doses to the remaining population over 16. At the time of writing 77% of the Inverclyde adult population had received a first dose and 46% had received a second dose. This compared with Scotland and GGC rates of 74% and 70% for first dose and 47% and 41% for second dose.

5.0 ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE

- 5.1 The Council's Corporate Resilience Management Team (CRMT) continues to meet fortnightly however the HSCP's Local Resilience Management Team (LRMT) has moved to meeting as required. Both groups are however in a position to step up the frequency of meetings if circumstances indicate that this would be useful.
- 5.2 The GGC Health Board wide resilience partnership meetings continue to be held on an “as required” basis. Specific regular meetings on operational matters relating to the pandemic including Environmental Health, community testing and the vaccination rollout continue with colleagues from GGC and constituent local authorities. In addition the Chief Executives of the six local authorities and the Health Board still meet regularly to monitor the overall situation.

6.0 WORKFORCE ISSUES

- 6.1 The decline in the rate of infection since the February update has obviously reduced the pressure on services. Regular workforce statistics continue to be produced for meetings of the Council and the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 6.2 The table below provides approximate absence levels council wide and within some of our key essential service areas, as at 2nd June 2021:

<u>Council</u>	
Historic average absence rate (%) (Pre Covid-19 to give a baseline comparator)	4.3%
Absence rate on 02 June 2021 (%) (This includes all those employees reporting sick, those isolating, those absent with caring responsibilities and shielding at home unable to work from home). Please note that this excludes employees working from home.	<p>Council Wide 5.0%</p> <p><u>Essential Services Breakdown (% of Service Area)</u></p> <p>Home Care 5.4%</p> <p>Other HSCP 2.5%</p> <p>Waste Management 5.9%</p> <p>Facilities 3.2%</p>

- 6.3 The table below provides a comparison of absence levels across the Council over the past year 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):

	12.5.20	26.5.20	9.6.20	16.7.20	5.8.20	9.9.20	17.11.20	19.1.21	5.2.21	12.3.21	12.04.21	07.05.21	02.06.21
Council	17.5%	17.6%	16.9%	7.5%	7.5%	7.7%	6.1%	7.6%	6.6%	6.4%	6.0%	5.2%	5.0%
Home Care	19.2%	20.2%	18.5%	7.8%	8.0%	7.9%	5.0%	12.0%	11.2%	8.7%	7.1%	6.7%	5.4%

Other HSCP	14.2%	17.3%	11.22%	6.3%	6.1%	6.2%	4.2%	3.6%	3.9%	3.7%	3.0%	2.5%	2.5%
Waste Mgt	24.3%	24.0%	23.9%	9%	8.9%	8.6%	8.0%	9.5%	10.7%	8.9%	8.7%	7.9%	5.9%
Facilities	26.1%	22.2%	14.6%	4.5%	4.6%	5.1%	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	7.2%	7.2%	3.1%	3.2%

7.0 SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

7.1 With Inverclyde moving to level 2 on the 17th May and subsequently to level 1 the main business support schemes administered by the Council on behalf of the Scottish Government have closed. Final reviews and appeals are now being concluded for the various schemes.

Total support payments exceed £23 million over the period of the various lockdowns over and above Non-Domestic Rates relief in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Separately from the national schemes the Partnership Recovery Plan being reported to this meeting contains a number of measures to support business in Inverclyde over the coming year and beyond.

8.0 VACCINATION STRATEGY

8.1 The HSCP and local GP practices have completed the delivery of second doses to the over 75s, care home residents and the clinically vulnerable. The vaccination roll out through the centres in Greenock and Port Glasgow Town Halls has focussed mainly on the delivery of second doses sequentially to the age cohorts over 50. The delivery of first doses to younger age cohorts has been taking place however and the pace of this is likely to increase over the coming weeks. At the time of writing 88% of 40-49 year olds in Inverclyde had received their first dose.

8.2 The Council and HSCP are working with the Health Board to look at the small percentage of those who have not attended appointments for vaccination. Early figures from the Health Board suggest that this is running at 6.8% in Inverclyde, roughly equivalent to Renfrewshire. The comparative figure in Glasgow is 12.1%. There is a noticeable increase in "did not attend" figures as we go down through the age groups. Work is ongoing to look at how we can target messaging at those who have not taken up the offer of vaccination to encourage them to come forward. Members will note that the first "drop in" vaccination clinics have now been held in Greenock and Port Glasgow targeting those who may have missed appointments.

8.3 Members may also be aware that trials are beginning on booster vaccinations to assess whether there will need to be a round of boosters in the autumn. Planning is underway with the Health Board on how this might be delivered in Inverclyde.

9.0 TESTING

9.1 The drive through testing facility at Parklea continues to operate every second day in tandem with the Crawfurdsburn walk in facility. It is undoubtedly the case that the testing capacity available was extremely helpful in the initial phase of the current pandemic wave. Access to testing is essential to allow positive cases to be identified and limit the spread from undiagnosed cases and asymptomatic contacts. There is at this stage no intention to reduce the availability of PCR testing in Inverclyde with Crawfurdsburn set to continue until the end of September.

9.2 Asymptomatic testing continues to be available at Boglestone Community Centre. It is intended that this should continue for the foreseeable future with the expectation that we will scale it up should the need arise. There is also now a degree of mobile testing capacity developed by other local authorities in GGC which could be available under mutual aid arrangements should there be a flare up of cases centred in Inverclyde in future. Packs of 7 Lateral Flow Device kits are now available to all and can be ordered through online by following the process in NHS Inform. Test kits can also be collected from Crawfurdsburn Community Centre and the Boglestone Community Centre testing site.

10.0 REGULATION

10.1 The Environmental Health & Trading Standards teams in Public Protection continue to carry out advisory & enforcement visits to businesses to ensure compliance with the current Coronavirus regulations. These include following up complaints from the public and employees in businesses and engaging with Police Scotland, the Health & Safety Executive and other agencies where powers under the regulations or other legislation lie with those bodies. Most recently advisory visits have been made to hospitality businesses as the restrictions on these have been eased.

11.0 HEALTH & WELLBEING

11.1 The Organisational Recovery Plan actions approved by the May Policy & Resources Committee include funding to allow the helpline to continue for the remainder of 2021-22. This will enable the service to plan for any possible setbacks in our progress out of the pandemic and to continue to support those required to self-isolate either as cases or contacts. Members should be aware that for the Indian or Delta variant expanded contact tracing to include contacts of household contacts who are not themselves positive can lead to larger numbers being required to self-isolate.

12.0 STREAMING OF FUNERALS

12.1 The procurement process has been completed for the streaming service with three tenders submitted. The tenders have been evaluated and the contract will have been awarded by the time of the Council meeting with streaming of funerals having commenced at the beginning of June.

13.0 CRUISE SHIP VISITS SCHEDULED 2021

13.1 At the time of writing cruise ship visits to Scottish ports have yet to be given the go ahead by the Scottish Government. Officers continue to work with Peel Ports, cruise operators and public health to ensure that this any resumption is safe and in accordance with any guidance issued as and when the green light is given for a resumption.

14.0 LOCAL GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW 2021

14.1 Audit Scotland published the above report on 27th May. The report deals with how local government dealt with the pandemic and contains the following key messages:

- The Covid-19 pandemic is having a profound impact on all aspects of society, including the economy, jobs, and the physical and mental health of the public
- Relationships with communities have been vital
- Levels of service disruption have varied
- Some services were delivered virtually
- The workforce demonstrated the versatility to take on new roles
- There were significant changes in council governance structures and processes
- Councils continue to face significant financial challenges, and these have been exacerbated by the pandemic
- The Scottish Government has provided substantial additional financial support, but the nature and timing of funding has created further challenges for councils
- Councils have started to plan for longer term recovery from the crisis
- There has been some ongoing learning resulting from the emergency response to the pandemic

The full report is available at [Local government in Scotland Overview 2021 | Audit Scotland \(audit-scotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/local-government-in-scotland-overview-2021).

14.2 The report contains a number of case studies on initiatives delivered in Councils, many of which will be familiar from similar initiatives delivered in Inverclyde. These include support services for those shielding, digital learning initiatives, close working with communities and the third sector and the redeployment of council staff to priority areas. Inverclyde Council is specifically mentioned with regard to early financial planning.

15.0 IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Finance

None

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/(savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With effect from	Annual net impact £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

15.2 Legal

None

15.3 Human Resources

None

15.4 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.
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NO

15.5 Repopulation

There are no impacts on repopulation arising from this report.

16.0 CONSULTATIONS

16.1 The Corporate Management Team has been consulted on this report.

17.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

17.1 None