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| **Coronavirus (Covid-19) – briefing** |

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Issued 2 April 2020

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| **Below is the latest briefing on the activity in managing the response to coronavirus (Covid-19).**  **Local updates, council service changes and links to trusted sources of health guidance are published at *www.inverclyde.gov.uk/coronavirus*** |

**Childcare hubs featured on STV**

Childcare for key workers featured on the national STV news last night. The report was carried out ensuring social distancing was adhered to and featured young people talking about the importance of providing childcare for their parents as key workers.

The full programme is available on the STV player at: <https://player.stv.tv/summary/stv-news-at-six> and a clip of the Inverclyde piece is published on the council’s social media channels.

**Starter packs update**

The following update has been issued by starter packs:

*The office is open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 1pm for anyone requiring a starter pack and to enable them to pick up within these hours.*

*The address is: Starter Packs Inverclyde, Unit 2, Empress Court, Greenock, PA15 4RW*

**Food shopping**

CVS Inverclyde has compiled this useful list of organisations and businesses supporting the community through food and shopping:

* ***Scouts -*** *leaders are shopping locally for anyone isolated – 07903445955*
* ***Inverclyde Home Fresh –*** *farmers market produce – no minimum order via email or text, £10 min order online. One man business so currently needing a weeks-notice for produce – free delivery to Inverclyde – 07412013352,* [*www.homefreshinverclyde.co.uk*](http://www.homefreshinverclyde.co.uk)[*inverclydehomefresh@hotmail.com*](mailto:inverclydehomefresh@hotmail.com)
* ***Robert Alexander Butcher –*** *delivery service only throughout Inverclyde – free delivery – order online at www.alexanderbutchers.co.uk or call 01475 741399*
* ***Co-op Eldon Street –*** *volunteer run delivery service for elderly and self-isolating ONLY – 01475 727762*
* ***Tesco –*** *elderly shopping hours Monday, Wednesday & Friday – 9am-10am (Port Glasgow and Greenock)*
* ***M&S –*** *Monday and Thursday elderly and vulnerable shopping mornings (first hour of opening)*
* ***Iceland –*** *Elderly, vulnerable and Key Workers opening, first hour of opening every day*
* ***Morrisons –*** *have a dedicated first hour of opening for elderly, vulnerable and NHS staff*
* ***Aldi –*** *everyday, key workers will take priority in queues into stores after showing ID. They can also gain early access on a Sunday, 30 minutes before opening time*
* ***Phil’s Bakery, Gourock –*** *providing baked goods delivered – 01475 630679*
* ***Harry Lalley Day-Today –*** *Delivery of essential items only, £5 min order due to free delivery – all of Greenock, Gourock, Inverkip & Wemyss Bay – call 07867492509 (Harry), 01475 632986 (Auchmead Rd Store), 01475 631390 (Fife Road Store)*
* ***McCaskie Butchers, Wemyss Bay –*** *delivery service of butcher products, order online at www.mccaskiebutcher.co.uk or call 01475 520192*
* ***Premier, Sinclair Street –*** *offering deliveries – 01475 808030*
* ***Costcutter, Captain Street –*** *delivery of essentials, free for people 70+ - call 01475 731678 or order via* [*www.just-eat.co.uk*](http://www.just-eat.co.uk)
* ***Duncan Mackenzie Craft Butcher –*** *free delivery available in Inverclyde, also have some essential food items in stock – call 01475 791677, 07368320423 or 07984610921*
* ***M.V.M Fruit and Veg –*** *telephone orders only, must leave name, address, order details and postcode - call 01475 785000*
* ***The Platter Merchant, Fishmongers –*** *deliveries only – call 07725348160*
* ***Colin Love Fishmonger, Kilmacolm –*** *priority to elderly customers, should give 24-hour notice of when needed – call 01505 872030*
* ***Belville Community Gardens -*** *will supply food/hygiene boxes to those self-isolating who don’t have the means to order one (no internet, credit card, friends/relatives etc.). If required, phone Belville on Tel. 01475 726034 with name, address, tel no of person who requires delivery. Any allergies or items the person particularly needs. All details are deleted after delivery.*

**Coronavirus legislation agreed at Parliament**

The Scottish Parliament unanimously supported new emergency powers to help protect the public, maintain essential public services and support the economy during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The Coronavirus (Scotland) Bill adjusts the law on evictions to protect people renting their homes in the private and social sector. The Bill delivers new provisions that are designed to ensure businesses, consumers and public services continue to operate effectively and makes necessary adjustments to the criminal justice system to ensure essential services continue.

People and some small businesses that are unable to repay debts due to the outbreak will be able to apply for a six-month ‘breathing space’ period. This will allow them to seek money advice and find long-term solutions to repay debts.

The Bill also allows licensing authorities to extend the deadlines for licence applications that allow the sale and supply of alcohol, and taxi and private hire. This flexibility will help to minimise the risk of losing current licensing rights due during the outbreak.

Below is a useful guide produced by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) outlining some of the key changes for local government.

**COSLA CORONAVIRUS BILL BRIEFING**

The below provides an overview of the provisions in the Bill as relevant to local authorities:

* Allow local authorities to exclude the public from local authority meetings on public health grounds - if the local authority considers that, if members of the public are present, this would create a real or substantial risk to public health, specifically relating to infection or contamination by coronavirus.
* Allow local authorities and other public bodies to publish documents online, in place of requirements to make them available in hard copy.
* Allow local authorities and public bodies to postpone requirements to publish reports on a particular date or during a particular period (Further clarification is required but the Bill states that the Scottish Ministers or a Scottish public authority may decide to postpone complying with such a duty if they consider that doing so would impede their ability to take action to combat coronavirus. If they decide to do so they must publish a statement to that effect, on or before the date the report is due or as soon as reasonably practical afterwards. This applies to statutory duties, within the competence of the Scottish Parliament to amend)
* Provide that where a full planning permission or planning permission in principle would expire during the relevant period then that permission should not lapse for a period of 12 months from the date on which the provisions come into force, irrespective of that development having not been commenced. The permission would only lapse if development has not commenced before the end of the 12 month period.
* Extend the deadline for public bodies to respond to Freedom of Information requests from 20 days to 60 days.
* Increase the minimum eviction notice period for private and social tenants to up to six months, as long as there are not grounds involving antisocial or criminal behaviour, or if the landlord needs to move into the property themselves.
* Coronavirus Bill – child care, protection and justice, and health and social care provisions:

Requirements as to members of children’s hearings -The Bill relaxes the requirement for three panel members, and for a male panel member to be on each hearing.

Child protection orders - Following the emergency placement of a child under a CPO, the Bill excises the requirement for a 2nd working day hearing and amends related timescales.

Maximum period for which a compulsory supervision order has effect - No compulsory supervision order shall lapse if its original end date has past, except where it has not otherwise been reviewed and continued within 6 months of its expiry date.

Period within which children’s hearing must be heard in certain cases - Following urgent transfers of children into certain placements the Bill amends the time limit for a hearing to be held to 7 days, instead of 3 days.

Foster and kinship care - The Bill removes the requirement on foster panels to make recommendations about the maximum number of children a particular foster carer may have in their care at any one time. The Bill also enables a local authority to place a child with a kinship carer, in an emergency, for a period not exceeding 5 working days, instead of 3 working days.

Maximum period for which interim compulsory supervision order or interim variation of compulsory supervision order has effect - The Bill provides that the maximum period for which an interim compulsory supervision order has effect is 44 days rather than 22 days.

Modification of certain time limits for making and determination of appeals - The Bill extends the time limits for the making, disposal or determination of appeals or the making or lodging of a range of court applications.

Attendance at children’s hearings - The Bill makes changes to facilitate the remote attendance of people who have right to attend a children’s hearing in person.

Authentication of children’s hearings documentation - The Bill enables the Reporter or chairing panel member to electronically authenticate documents.

Secure accommodation -In emergency cases, the Bill extends the maximum time in which a child may be kept in secure accommodation on the authority of the chief social work officer from 72 to 96 hours

Courts and tribunals - Participants in a criminal or civil proceeding in court to appear via video or audio link from elsewhere, and some procedural hearings could be held entirely over the internet. The legislation also extends the time limits which usually exist for criminal proceedings.

Early release of prisoners – Powers to release some prisoners early should so many prisoner officers and staff fall ill that it is no longer safe to operate prisons at their

current population levels.

Adults with incapacity - Extending guardianships for adults with incapacity, extending the period of existing certificates to authorise medical treatment, and amending provision of services to adults with incapacity to amongst other things expedite discharge from hospital.

The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 deals with a range of local government licensing functions – from taxis to scrap metal dealers and market operators. Where a local authority doesn’t reach a decision on a licence application within nine months, the 1982 Act provides for the licensing in question to be automatically granted or renewed. This requirement is intended to ensure decisions which have significant implications for people’s livelihoods are made timeously. However, it could also result in licences being issued to people who were not suitable (termed “fit and proper” in the legislation). And it could mean that licences were issued without appropriate conditions. Paragraph 1(2) of Part 1 to Schedule 6 of the Bill extends the maximum time frame for local authorities to reach a decision on licence applications and renewals from nine to 12 months.

Once the Bill has completed its Parliamentary process, The Scottish Government will provide high-level guidance to assist public bodies identify the provisions that are likely to be relevant and action they need to take.

The Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) also published, in advance of the Bill, a briefing available online at: <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2020/03/31/coronavirus-scotland-bill-spice-briefing/#Schedule5>

**Funding to support GPs open on Easter holidays**

The Scottish Government has announced additional funding of £15 million to be provided to GP practices to help them cope with extra pressures arising from coronavirus (COVID-19).

Around a third of the funding is intended to allow practices to remain open on Good Friday and Easter Monday if it is safe to do so – helping to alleviate pressures on out-of-hours services.

The remainder will help to cover costs of equipment, additional non-clinical staff, GP partners and locum cover for sickness leave.

**Support for victims of domestic violence**

Extra funding has been announced to support the safety and well-being of women and children who are at risk of experiencing violence during the coronavirus (Covid-19).

Grants from the Scottish Government’s £350 million ‘communities fund’ have been made to Scottish Women’s Aid and Rape Crisis Scotland to ensure that access to these key support services is maintained and victims still have access to methods of reporting crimes during the crisis, including using online video platforms, text messaging and phone calls.

Scottish Women’s Aid will receive £1.35 million over six months and Rape Crisis Scotland will receive £226,309 over six months.

Scotland’s 24hr domestic abuse and forced marriage helpline is available on 0800 027 1234.

Rape Crisis Scotland Helpline is available on 08088 01 03 02. Calls to this number are free. Or email support@rapecrisisscotland.org.uk or text 07537 410027.

**Home Energy Scotland update**  
Below is an updates issued by Home Energy Scotland:

*Home heating and energy use will be affected by people staying home to avoid picking up coronavirus - free, impartial advice from friendly advisors who are determined to help*

*Householders in Scotland could face higher energy bills as a result of Lockdown, especially if required to work from home using IT equipment. The Scottish Government’s Home Energy Scotland advice service can support people whose home heating and energy use is affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.*

*Determined to help, the free and impartial energy advice service is open as usual, with telephone advisors working safely from home to help householders worried about their energy bills or struggling to stay warm at home.*

*Advisors can help with any questions people may have around staying warm and saving energy whilst self-isolating, working from home, or getting to grips with home-schooling duties. The team has the latest information from energy suppliers who have agreed emergency measures to make sure vulnerable people and those with prepayment meters do not get cut off during the coronavirus outbreak. Advisors can also help with practical advice and energy saving tips to help ease pressure on household finances.*

*Robbie Dalrymple, Home Energy Scotland Advice Centre Manager said:*

*“Many of us will be spending more time at home over the next few weeks and maybe months – and while your top priority will be keeping yourself and your family safe, you might be worried about the effect this will have on your energy bills.*

*“Home Energy Scotland is funded by the Scottish Government and here to help. Our service is free and impartial, and we are committed to keeping people across Scotland warm and in control of their energy use and spend.*

*“If you are, or someone you know is worried about energy bills, contact a friendly advisor free on 0808 808 2282, Monday – Friday 8am – 8pm and Saturday 9am – 5pm.”*

*For the latest information from Home Energy Scotland and top tips for saving energy, visit www.homeenergyscotland.org*