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

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Issued 18 May 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*** |

**Update to Coronavirus symptoms**

The four UK Chief Medical Officers have issued a statement updating the coronavirus symptoms:

 “From today (18 May 2020), all individuals should self-isolate if they develop a new continuous cough or fever or anosmia.

“Anosmia is the loss or a change in your normal sense of smell. It can also affect your sense of taste as the two are closely linked.

“We have been closely monitoring the emerging data and evidence on COVID-19 and after thorough consideration, we are now confident enough to recommend this new measure.

“The individual’s household should also self-isolate for 14 days as per the current guidelines and the individual should stay at home for 7 days, or longer if they still have symptoms other than cough or loss of sense of smell or taste.”

Changes for the symptomatic individual and their household:

Individuals will need to self-isolate immediately if they develop a new continuous cough OR fever OR as of today, a loss or changed sense of normal smell or taste (Anosmia).

All members of their household must also self-isolate according to current guidelines, unless the symptomatic individual receives a negative test result.

**Mobile site to open this week**A new mobile testing facility run by the Army is expected to be open in Inverclyde on Friday. The facility will supplement the existing site at Glasgow Airport.

Visit this link to find out more about arranging a test: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/arrange-a-test/>

**Councils planning ahead for recycling opening**
Scotland’s councils are working towards re-opening recycling centres by 1 June.

The announcement comes after Scotland’s council leader, including Inverlcyde Council Leader, Councillor Stephen McCabe, met online on Friday.

Councillor McCabe, said: “The restrictions have been in place to support the national lockdown and to make sure that we can maintain the services we are able to deliver during this health crisis.  All Scottish councils have been working on the planning for how services re-open and we work towards recovery.  Clearly any service, whenever it re-opens will need to adheres to the social and physical distancing rules in place at that time and arrangements will need to be flexible to move up or down to be responsive to the needs of the community. Any easing of restrictions needs to be carefully managed to make sure that residents and employees are safe and in line with agreed guidance between Scotland’s councils and the Scottish Government”

Councillor Steven Heddle, COSLA’s Environment and Economy Spokesperson said:  “Leaders agreed that Local Authorities will plan for the reopening of Household Waste Recycling Centres on 1 June. The reopening of sites depends on receiving assurance that this will not negatively impact the Covid-19 infection rate and will be consistent with national travel advice.

 “There will also be local considerations including the need to maintain physical distancing for staff and members and public which will determine whether and to what extent individual sites will be able to reopen. The intent behind this decision is to provide a level of coordination across Scotland, to avoid a disjointed approach, which could lead to confusion, and to ensure access to Household Waste Recycling Sites is managed to best ensure the safety of both staff and the public.  We are working closely with the Scottish Government and partners on this and are drawing up guidance.”

**Care home support powers proposed**

The Scottish government has announced proposed legislation described as a ‘safety net’ for care sector due to Covid-19.

New measures have been proposed to ensure swift intervention if care home residents are being put at serious risk due to services failing.

The planned emergency powers are being put forward as a Scottish Government amendment to the Coronavirus (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill ahead of Stage 2 next week. The amendments make clear that, if there was a significant risk to the life, health or wellbeing of individuals, or that a provider was unable to deliver care due to failure, that strengthened emergency powers will be available to ensure continuity of care.

If passed by the Scottish Parliament, the emergency powers will provide assurance to those who depend on care services, their families, and the staff that deliver care, that additional oversight and support is available in the rare circumstances that it may be required.

**New care home guidance published**
The Scottish Government has published new guidance titled: “Coronavirus (COVID-19): care home oversight”.

The guidance sets out arrangements care homes should put in place to improve the professional oversight of care provided during the coronavirus pandemic.

Here is a link to the guidance: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-care-home-oversight/>

The guidance should be read in conjunction with the clinical and practice guidance for adult care homes published on 15 May 2020 and published here: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-clinical-and-practice-guidance-for-adult-care-homes/>

**Support for women involved in prostitution**
Additional funding for vital specialist services for sex workers during COVID-19 outbreak has been proposed by the Scottish Government.

They announced more than £60,000 is being invested to provide additional support to women involved in prostitution during the COVID- 19 pandemic.

The funding, will help nine organisations across Scotland increase their staffing and enable women involved in prostitution to access support and trauma counselling. The funding will be delivered through the Encompass Network of support agencies.

A total of £61,771 has been awarded under the Scottish Government’s Immediate Priorities Fund and will be distributed by the Encompass Network to nine organisations across Scotland who provide specialist support services to women engaged in prostitution.

The Encompass Network is a network of Scottish agencies working with people who are currently involved in and/or planning to exit prostitution. The agencies have both national and regional cover. Women who do not have a local service can engage with The Click Project which offers online support to women across Scotland or call them on 0300 1245564.

**Concern over treatment of prisoners**
The Scottish Human Rights Commission has written to the Justice Committee at the Scottish Parliament to highlight concerns about measures being taken in prisons during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission has expressed concern that the current conditions being experienced by some people in Scottish prisons could amount to inhuman and degrading treatment, in breach of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Commission is urging the Scottish Government to take action to ensure that the conditions in which all prisoners are being held are fully in accordance with their human rights obligations.

Read the full letter: <https://www.scottishhumanrights.com/media/2025/20_05_letter-to-justice-committe-prisons-covid-vfinal2.pdf>