

A meeting of the Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee will be held on Tuesday 21 April 2020 at 3.00pm within the Municipal Buildings, Greenock.

Teleconference facilities will be available for Members and Officers. Please note, videoconferencing facilities may be available to Members of the Executive Sub-Committee for this meeting and any update on this will be sent as soon as possible.

GERARD MALONE
Head of Legal & Property Services

BUSINESS

1. **Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest**
2. **COVID-19 (Coronavirus): Scrutiny Report**
Report by Chief Executive
3. **Changes to Civic Licensing: Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020**
Report by Head of Legal & Property Services
4. **Civic Licensing – Taxi Drivers and Taxi Operators**
Request by Councillor C McEleny
Report by Head of Legal & Property Services
5. **Covid 19 Community Funding**
Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development
6. **Engagement with Scottish Government**
Report by Head of Legal & Property Services

The documentation relative to the following items has been treated as exempt information in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, the nature of the exempt information being that set out in the paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act whose numbers are set out opposite the heading to each item.

7. **Lease Renewal - Dubbs Road, Port Glasgow** **Paras 2, 6 & 9**
Report by Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on renewal of the lease of premises at Dubbs Road, Port Glasgow

8. **Lease Renewal - Church Street, Port Glasgow** **Paras 2, 6 & 9**
Report by Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on renewal of the lease of premises at Church Street, Port Glasgow
9. **Variation of Permitted Use - Moss Road, Port Glasgow** **Paras 2, 6 & 9**
Report by Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources on proposed variation of the permitted use of premises at Moss Road, Port Glasgow

Please note that because of the current COVID-19 (Coronavirus) emergency, this meeting will not be open to members of the public.

The reports are available publicly on the Council's website. The actions and decisions taken at the meeting will be published on the website as soon as possible.

In terms of Section 50A(3A) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as introduced by Schedule 6, Paragraph 13 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, it is necessary to exclude the public from the meetings of the Executive Sub-Committee on public health grounds. The Council considers that, if members of the public were to be present, this would create a real or substantial risk to public health, specifically relating to infection or contamination by Coronavirus.

Enquiries to – **Rona McGhee** - Tel 01475 712113

Report To:	Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee	Date:	21 April 2020
Report By:	Chief Executive	Report No:	LP/053/20
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 to ensure 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 15 April 2020 and Members will appreciate this is a constantly evolving situation.
- 2.4 There will be reports with updates in this format to each meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Sub-Committee notes:

- 3.1 the actions taken to date to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 emergency in Inverclyde;
- 3.2 that further reports will be submitted regularly for Members' scrutiny and review; and
- 3.3 that the current suspension of parking enforcement should remain in force for a further 6 weeks, to 2 June 2020 or alternatively, until there are any significant changes to Government Guidance on social distancing, whichever is the sooner.

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 **Update on PPE.** Then Council has maintained a reasonable level of stock in relation to PPE in Inverclyde due to frequent deliveries in early March. There are priority areas to ensure supply to front facing staff across services. The list includes;

- Care at Home
- James Watt Court Learning Disability Service
- Children's Homes
- Inverclyde Centre
- Assessment Centre Greenock Health Centre
- Testing Centre Port Glasgow

- District Nursing
- Care Homes(External)
- Supported Living Providers(External)
- Carers Centre

5.6 The main PPE store is in Central Greenock and has a well-defined process now for ensuring stock reaches the teams that require PPE. The PPE stock includes, gloves, aprons, masks and eye protection. Last week 9000 masks were moved to Care at Home teams across Inverclyde. 1000 masks were provided to personal assistants who look after a small number of service users in the community who rely on various mechanical aids to assist with breathing.

5.7 It is important moving forward that fresh stock is received from the various sources to ensure seamless supply to front line services. This is monitored daily by staff and reported back to SMT.

5.8 **Mobilisation Plan.** The HSCP has moved to a Hub delivery model. Linked to this a local mobilisation plan has been developed and submitted through the Health Board to Scottish Government. On 9th April the Cabinet Secretary confirmed agreement in principle to fund the first 3 months of that mobilisation plan.

5.9 The mobilisation plan includes:

- the purchase of up to 70 additional care home beds, with provisional plans to increase this if required
- anticipated additional staffing costs to cover demand increase and increased staff absence
- anticipated additional provider costs
- anticipated loss of day centre income
- anticipated costs of the assessment and testing centres
- additional security costs to support the Inverclyde Centre and Addictions services
- additional PPE and IT costs

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITIES

5.10 **Hubs.** The hubs continue to run well and did not close over the Easter holidays, including the bank holidays. On average the number of pupils attending is in the 90s each day. Of this number approximately 70% are the children of Key Workers and 30% are vulnerable pupils. Daily monitoring returns to the Scottish Government have allowed officers to support hubs to review their staffing rotas so that capacity is maintained in the long term.

5.11 As of the 20th of April hubs reduced from 9 to 11, having moved Rainbow into the Newark and the Glenbrae hub into All Saints. This is mainly due to low numbers at Rainbow and Glenbrae and also the challenges of having to maintain 11 sites being cleaned and open.

5.12 The 9 hub model looks to be more sustainable in terms of numbers and staffing for the foreseeable future but this will be kept under weekly review.

5.13 The attendance of vulnerable pupils is also part of procedures to track and monitor pupils in relation to child protection. Transport is being provided where this has proven to be a barrier to pupils attending

5.14 A handbook of guidance agreed across Education and HSCP has been created and is included with this report. This tracking process across Education, HCSP and Barnardos is ensuring that professionals have sight of all pupils where there are concerns or where they are on the child protection register. Where there is no sight of the most vulnerable pupils then members of the Social Work and CLD teams are making visits to houses to check in on families and promote the hubs to them.

5.15 Officers have been able to make an offer to all applicants via the initial online survey. Since then communications has been issued to encourage any parents who are key workers and require childcare to contact the hubs for this. The Head of Education is acting as the arbiter in

this process i.e. to deal with issues and complaints. To date the need of this has been minimal.

- 5.16 **SQA.** One of the next challenges facing Education is securing outcomes for pupils across the Senior Phase. At the time of writing we have received an initial statement from the SQA with some detail as to how this will be achieved. Further guidance from the SQA is expected on the 20th of April 2020.
- 5.17 Officers are liaising with authority colleagues across Scotland via the Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES) Curriculum and Qualifications group. This is allowing the Council to be part of consultations and negotiations with the SQA as to how the guidance on the 20th April will look.
- 5.18 The biggest issue is to ensure the integrity of the assessment evidence being used to award grades to young people without an exam i.e. a greater focus than ever before is being made on teacher professional judgement. As such officers must ensure the integrity of this in each schools, across Inverclyde and then nationally. Hence the need for a highly coordinated approach through ADES.
- 5.19 Officers are confident that schools have already considered what they need to do at this stage however challenges will remain and hope that the process of negotiation between ADES and SQA will somewhat alleviate these.
- 5.20 The Head of Education and Head Teachers have written to parents to keep them up to date with the current situation and will communicate with them again once the national picture is clearer.

ENVIRONMENT, REGENERATION AND RESOURCES

- 5.21 **Business Grants Scheme.** A dedicated team within Revenues & Benefits are processing applications for the Scottish Government Business Grants Scheme. As at 15 April almost 600 applications have been received and 111 payments made totalling £1.245million. The speed of payments has increased as the team gain experience. Further information is being sought on over 200 applications due to incomplete forms being received. The Scottish Government is issuing more detailed guidance/advice based on questions being raised by Councils and there are several areas where clarification is awaited before officers can progress certain applications.
- On the 15th April further changes were made to the scheme to expand eligibility and officers await guidance on the eligibility detail and application process. This will undoubtedly increase pressure on the team.
- 5.22 **Scottish Welfare Fund.** The Scottish Welfare Fund has seen a more than doubling in the number of Crisis Grant awards and that allied to the decision to increase the value of awards by 20% means the Council is currently spending money in line with the level of funding awarded by the Government. Currently the team require to be present in the Municipal Buildings to deliver this service although officers are examining ways by which the service could be delivered in whole or in part remotely.
- 5.23 **Registrars.** The Registrars are delivering a 7 day a week service with effect from 11 April. This is in line with a national agreement. Due to the fact there are no Birth Registrations or Marriages being arranged and the team are all present all deaths are being remotely registered timeously with no backlog despite the increased numbers being experienced.
- 5.24 **Humanitarian Assistance Centre.** The Council and partners have a Humanitarian Assistance Centre working group meeting regularly to refine processes for dealing with firstly the "Shielding " group of extremely vulnerable people, amounting to some 2000 in Inverclyde and secondly the wider group of those more vulnerable to COVID 19 on health grounds in Inverclyde, amounting to approximately 25,000 people.
- 5.25 **Shielding.** It is hoped that the majority of the Shielding group will have been contacted by the

Council by the time of this meeting. The purpose of the call is to assess their needs in a number of areas and to ensure that the relevant support, whether from the national programme for supplying food to this group or for any other purpose is provided to them. We have also started receiving calls from the wider vulnerable group redirected from the national helpline as of 14th April and will advise and signpost them to any appropriate assistance primarily from the third sector.

5.26 **Parking Enforcement.** Members will be aware from the previous meeting that the decision was taken by the CMT on 23 March 2020 to suspend parking enforcement, car park charges and the service of PCNs for overstay and failure to display time clocks in Inverclyde. Enforcement remains an option for parking on yellow lines and bus stops etc. The Inverclyde decision is broadly in line with later operational advice issued through COSLA on 6th April. At the time of the CMT decision it was decided that this would be reviewed in 4 weeks' time. As this was due on 20th April it would be appropriate for members to make the decision. The CMT recommends that the current suspension should remain in force for a further 6 weeks, till the 2nd June or until there are any significant changes to Government Guidance on social distancing, whichever is the sooner.

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. The table below provides approximate absence levels across the council as at 14 April 2020.

6.4 A summarised table of workforce attendance figures for the Council is as follows:-

<u>Council</u>	
Historic average absence rate (%) (Pre Covid-19 to give a baseline comparator.)	4.3%
Absence rate on 14 April 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.	19.3%

6.5 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.

- 6.6 **Annual Accounts.** The Annual Accounts preparation process is progressing with no relaxation yet on the statutory timescales in Scotland, unlike England where the timescales have been extended by 2 months. It is expected that greater use of estimation and higher thresholds will be required in closing the 2019/20 accounts and discussions are ongoing with the Auditors. Members will require to review the unaudited accounts before the 30 June although indications are that this timescale is likely to be extended.
- 6.7 **Early Learning and Childcare.** 1140 Hours Expansion Plan: On 1 April 2020, The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Modification) (No. 2) Revocation Order 2020 was approved by the Scottish Parliament. The order revokes the change to the 2014 Children and Young People's Act that requires education authorities to secure 1140 hours of ELC provision for all eligible children from August 2020, rather than 600 hours. It effectively means that there will be no statutory duty to provide 1140 hours from August 2020.
- 6.8 Work is currently underway to identify the key issues in Inverclyde. This will include infrastructure, staffing, finance, admissions and funded provider sustainability. A detailed report is being compiled and be submitted to Committee in due course.
- 6.9 It is anticipated that most children will receive their allocation of 1140 hours by August 2020; however careful consideration will need to be given to defining a criteria for this to ensure equity in allocations.
- 6.10 **Recovery Plan.** We have commenced weekly meetings of an internal recovery group which is tasked with looking at how various Council services can return to normality over the forthcoming weeks and months. It is recognised that there will also be a need for a multi-agency recovery group to look at what is needed to support businesses and the community on any return to normality and the make-up of this group is under consideration.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

The extra costs arising from COVID-19 are being identified and fortnightly returns are to be sent to Cosla from 24th April with weekly returns for extra HSCP costs being co-ordinated by the IJB Chief Financial Officer. The Council has received £749,000 as part of the £50million Hardship Fund from the Scottish Government but it is anticipated that extra costs/income reductions will exceed this sum.

An update will be provided to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

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

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

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 2 April 2020 to Wednesday 8 April 2020

Head of Legal & Property Services

GM/KB

9 April 2020

Environment, Regeneration & Resources Directorate

Service Impact	Reason	Reported to CMT	Supporting Report Yes – N/A	Implemented	Officer
<u>Legal & Property Services</u>					
25 Scheme of Establishment: Community Councils – (a) permit tele/videoconferencing;(b) reduce the required meetings from 6 to a proportionate no.; and, (c) disregard the membership nos. minimum and the cancellation of 3 consecutive meetings	To comply with social distancing and to meet the request for flexibility with the arrangements specified.	Yes	Yes	7/04/20	GM
<u>Finance</u>					
26 Death Registration Service operating 7 days per week	National instruction from NRS to cope with volume and improve accuracy of figures	No	Rota document	11.4.20	AML
<u>Regeneration & Planning</u>					
27 Extension to planning permission and planning permission in principle	Scottish Government	No	N/A	07.04.20	SJ
<u>Environmental & Public Protection</u>					
28. Agreement to reduce morning time slots at crematorium and to provide a service on Good Friday & Easter Monday.	To increase potential throughput in the crematorium.	06/04/20	Yes	Implementation of reduced time slots initially to be with immediate effect but delayed owing to issues with one of the two cremators.	MMcN

Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee
Weekly Update on Operational Decision Log
From Thursday 9 April 2020 to Wednesday 15 April 2020

Head of Legal & Property Services
GM/KB
16 April 2020

Service Impact	Reason	Reported to CMT	Supporting Report Yes – N/A	Implemented	Officer
Education, Communities & Organisational Development					
29. Recruitment process for existing advertised posts and new adverts will be supported and progressed by HR and services as appropriate. Services should contact HR to progress any urgent new recruitment with oversight by CMT.	Ensure key posts are recruited effectively and to ensure the delivery of critical services across the Council.	10.04.20	Yes	Yes	SMcN
30. Arrangements for the management of employee Annual Leave over the next three months agreed with the support of the trade unions.	To ensure annual leave is managed effectively over the year.	09.04.20	Yes	Yes	SMcN
31. Advert for emergency support workers to be put on hold for two weeks to allow backlog to be trained and to move into frontline services.	Assuring the delivery of essential services and also avoiding delays between candidates expressing an interest and being recruited.	09.04.20	N/A	Yes	SMcN
Environment, Regeneration & Resources Directorate					
<u>Finance</u>					
32. ICT : videoconferencing for P&R Executive Sub Committee meetings etc.	To comply with social distancing and enhance Elected Member and officer remote accessibility to and participation in Committee meetings	10.04.20	Briefing note 16.04.20	Intended 21.4.20	AMcD

Health and Social Care Partnership

33. Supported Living Service: Confirming current payment levels whilst implementing alterations to working practices for necessary reduced contact time and appropriate adjustment to care packages.	To guarantee Providers with current funding levels whilst service delivery model is changed to reduce risk to service user by reducing contact time to minimum possible and to comply with social distancing	10.04.20	Yes	10.04.20	LL
34. Suspension of Significant Case Review	Unable to undertake effective investigation because of COVID-19 emergency.	Chief Officers' Group 15.04.20	N/A	15.04.20	AS

Report To:	Policy and Resources Executive Sub- Committee	Date:	21 April 2020
Report By:	Head of Legal & Property Services	Report No:	LP/051/20
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712710
Subject:	Changes to Civic Licensing: Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to the Executive Sub-Committee the approach officers should take in relation to the renewals of all civic licensing in light of provisions contained within the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, which sets out modifications to licensing legislation following upon the COVID-19 emergency.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020, "the Act", was enacted on 7 April 2020 and supplements the emergency powers introduced in the UK government's legislation to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus. The Act contains further powers and additional measures on devolved areas of policy to ensure essential public services and businesses can continue to operate.
- 2.2 The measures in the Act are limited for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak and will expire on 30 September 2020, although Scottish Ministers can extend the provisions for two further periods of six months, meaning that the legislation may be in place of a maximum period of eighteen months.
- 2.3 For all civic licences, the Act authorises a three- month extension in the renewal process but retains the original duration of the licence. This report implements this authorisation but, in view of the known wishes of the Council to support local businesses and the economy in any ways possible, it also notes for Members' information the estimated costs of any extension of licences at no cost to applicants by an equivalent three-month period

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive Sub-Committee

- 3.1 considers the terms of this report; and
- 3.2 notes the Act provides that applications for renewal of taxi/private hire licences and all other civic licences can now be lodged on good cause up to three months after the date of expiry of the licence.

Gerard Malone

Head of Legal & Property Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Act was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament and received Royal Assent on 6 April 2020, supplementing the emergency powers introduced in the UK Government's legislation to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus. The Act came into force on 7 April 2020 and contains further powers and additional measures on devolved areas of policy to ensure essential public services and businesses can continue to operate.
- 4.2 In particular, Schedule 6 of the Act sets out modifications to Civic Licensing contained within the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.
- 4.3 Schedule 5 of the Act sets out modifications to provisions contained within the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 relative to Alcohol Licences and this will form a separate report to the Corporate Management Team in due course. There is no similar provision to the three- month period referred to in relation to Civic Licensing, below, as the renewal periods for alcohol licensing are different.

5.0 PROPOSALS IN RELATION TO CIVIC LICENSING

- 5.1 The following provisions will apply to all forms of civic licensing applications. In terms of proportions, there are obviously considerable numbers, especially, of applications for renewals annually of taxi driver licences and for operators' licences.
- 5.2 Previously under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act applications for renewal of taxi and private hire licences required to be made either prior to the date of expiry or up to twenty eight days after the date of expiry "on good cause".
- 5.3 The Act now allows applications for renewal of taxi /private hire licences and all other civic licences to be made "on good cause" up to three months rather than twenty eight days after the date of expiry .This effectively defers payment of the fee due upon making such an application for a period of three months. The licence will still run from the original date of issue rather than licence holders obtaining an additional three month period. This provision, accordingly, assists with cash-flow but does not extend the duration of the licence and the continuity of the licence will remain as a cost borne by the applicant
- 5.4 In view of the above, and given the known wishes of the Council to support local businesses and the economy in any way possible, the CMT has reviewed the implications and estimated costs of any extension of licences at no cost to applicants by an equivalent three-month period. For all civic and for all alcohol licences (it being suggested that any discretionary extension be applicable to both types of licences) any such proposal would involve a financial contribution by the Council amounting to an estimated sum of £79,000 for this financial year. The implications of any extension might also be thought to have far wider implications for any other payments for services or for other businesses, affecting lease or rental payments, for those affected by the emergency and, so, the CMT cannot recommend any discretionary extension for licence renewals
- 5.5 A breakdown and three year summary of all licensing income is attached at **Appendix 1**. This shows the complete list of all different types of civic licences and summarises alcohol licensing fee income. The £79,000 calculation is shown in the summary.
- 5.6 In terms of financial assistance, there are sources of support for businesses and individuals through the recently introduced Government schemes. The costs for applying, for example, for a taxi driver's licence is £72 (£74 in 2020/21) p.a. and for a taxi operator's licence is £340 (£350 in 2020/21) and it is fair to note these application fees will amount to a relatively low proportion of the annual operating costs of vehicles in the taxi trade.
- 5.7 Accordingly, it is proposed to post a notice on the Council's licensing website confirming that the Council will accept applications for renewal of all civic government licences including the renewal of taxi / private hire licences up to three months after the date of expiry "on good

cause“ if that “good cause“ relates to coronavirus reasons and it will be noted licences will run from the original date of issue .

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Civic Government and Alcohol Licensing	Civic Licensing and Alcohol Licensing	2020/21	£79,000	N/A	These costs are not recommended by the CMT

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

6.2 Legal

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

6.3 Human Resources

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

6.4 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.
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X	NO
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(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

6.5 **Repopulation**

There are no direct repopulation issues.

7.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 This report has been endorsed by the Corporate Management Team.

8.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Average 3 years	3 month effect
Betting	(15,120)	(17,320)	(6,590)	(13,010)	(3,253)
Late Hour	(3,379)	(5,284)	(6,162)	(4,942)	(1,235)
Other	(2,649)	(7,920)	(6,063)	(5,544)	(1,386)
Second Hand	(3,136)	(1,382)	(2,526)	(2,348)	(587)
Street Trader	(2,182)	(2,360)	(2,030)	(2,191)	(548)
Public Entertainment	(7,383)	(3,500)	(4,830)	(5,238)	(1,309)
Window Cleaner	(420)	(840)	(720)	(660)	(165)
Operators	(45,277)	(44,602)	(44,137)	(44,672)	(11,168)
Cab Driver	(110,220)	(117,300)	(111,724)	(113,081)	(28,270)
Liquor	(77,834)	(108,032)	(102,271)	(96,046)	(25,568)
House in multiple occupation	(4,626)	(5,783)	(20,247)	(10,219)	(5,062)
Reg of So	0	0	(460)	(153)	(115)
	<u>(272,225)</u>	<u>(314,321)</u>	<u>(307,759)</u>	<u>(298,102)</u>	<u>(78,666)</u>

Report To:	Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee	Date:	21 April 2020
Report By:	Head of Legal & Property Services	Report No:	LP/050/20
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712701
Subject:	Civic Licensing – Taxi Drivers and Taxi Operators Request by Councillor C McEleny		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Sub-Committee of a request received from Councillor C McEleny that, as taxi drivers are struggling significantly as people stay at home and many drivers are coming off the road for social distancing measures, in line with the recent changes in legislation permitting a three-month deferral of renewal application, all renewals of taxi driver licences and taxi/private hire licences be extended for three months at no cost to the applicants.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Executive Sub-Committee considers the request by Councillor C McEleny.

Report To:	Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee	Date:	21 April, 2020
Report By:	Ruth Binks, Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	PR/11/20/HS
Contact Officer:	Hugh Scott, Service Manager	Contact No:	5459
Subject:	Covid-19 Community Funding		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report seeks Sub-Committee approval for the proposals to address and mitigate the risks arising from the Covid-19 emergency across a number of self-managed community centres and a number of recipients of Grants to Voluntary Organisations funding.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Ongoing consideration has been given to the loss of income which is now being experienced by many centres/organisations across the authority, during the current Covid-19 lockdown and the resulting financial impact which this is having on their monthly outgoings. The centres and organisations particularly affected are those which have fixed overheads or maintenance costs.
- 2.2 There are seven self-managed community centres that receive financial support from the Community Based Services funding stream as shown in Appendix 1. Three of these centres receive funding on a monthly basis with the remaining four receiving funding on a quarterly basis. All centres submit invoices monthly/quarterly in arrears. It is proposed to release a quarterly payment to all centres covering the period April to June whilst officers undertake a review of the financial position of all organisations prior to any further release of funding in 2020/21. This review would include the expectation that the Centres will apply to all other available funding sources which have been made available as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. A future report will be brought to the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee once further details are known.
- 2.3 A number of bowling clubs have contacted the Council expressing concerns about the sustainability of their Club during Covid-19 due to the lack of income from annual membership fees and fixed overheads to keep the greens maintained. Where Clubs have a bar facility, there is further loss of income due to the current lockdown. Details of the bowling clubs and the level of GTVO support in 2019/20 are also listed in Appendix 1. Clubs will be expected to apply for other sources of funding including the Business Grants scheme, however not all will be eligible. Where funding cannot be accessed by another source, then it is recommended that the same level of GTVO support is given to the club as they received it last year. In order to help the clubs with cashflow, the intention would be to offer the grants to the clubs in early May, ahead of the GTVO process.
- 2.4 There are a number of organisations previously in receipt of funding from Grants to Voluntary Organisations where the funding is primarily used to support ongoing rental and utility costs. Like many other organisations, they are currently experiencing loss of income via membership fees and hall rentals however they still have the pressure of unavoidable fixed costs. Details of these organisations are listed in Appendix 1. If agreed by the Sub-Committee, the intention would be to treat these organisations in the same way as bowling clubs and where other funding sources are not available, to offer grants to these clubs at the same rate as last year but ahead of the usual GTVO process.

- 2.5 Officers are working very closely with the 3rd sector offering support during the current situation and the intention is to complete financial assessments as soon as possible.
- 2.6 All organisations have been forwarded information on various sources of funding which they may be eligible for to support their current gap in income. It is expected that all organisations will pursue these funding resources and not be solely reliant on grants from the Council.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Sub-Committee agrees that officers should release the April-June quarters payment to all self-managed Community Centres whilst officers review the financial information supplied by each of the centres and note that a further and more detailed report will be brought back to the Sub-Committee regarding future funding levels.
- 3.2 For the GTVO recipients outlined in Appendix 1, the recommendation is that officers support the organisations to optimise other funding available to support organisations through the Covid-19 crisis and, where required, approve GTVO support up to the same rate as last year and for this payment to be released prior to the main GTVO exercise on the condition that organisations will pursue these funding resources and not be solely reliant on grants from the Council.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director – Education,
Communities & Organisational Development

APPENDIX 1

Self-Managed Community Centres (funding via Community Based Services)

Craigend Resource Centre
Branchton Community Centre
Youth Connections
Broomhill Centre
Gibshill Community Centre
Kilmacolm Community Centre
Inverkip Hub

Bowling Clubs (funding via GTVO)

Ardgowan Club
Fort Matilda Bowling Club
Gourock Bowling Club
Gourock Park Bowling Club
Grosvenor Bowling Club
Hillend Bowling Club
Inverkip Bowling Club
Lady Alice Bowling Club
Parklea Bowling Club
Port Glasgow Bowling Club
Rankin Park Bowling Club
Victoria Bowling Club
Wellington Park Bowling Club

Other Organisations (funding via GTVO)

Auchmountain Glen
Wemyss Bay Community Association
Greenock & District Sea Cadets
Greenock & District Scout Council

Report To:	Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee	Date:	21 April 2020
Report By:	Head of Legal & Property Services	Report No:	LP/049/20
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712710
Subject:	Engagement with Scottish Government		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to provide the Executive Sub-Committee with information on engagement with the Scottish Government.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following consideration of a report by the Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources providing an update on the response received from the Scottish Government relative to the Council's resolution in relation to Inchgreen Dry Dock, the Executive Sub-Committee at the meeting held on 7 April 2020 agreed that a report be submitted to its next meeting on any outstanding items of representation made by the Council to the Scottish Government.
- 2.2 Two items in respect of which the Council is engaged with the Scottish Government have been identified, being (1) the temporary withdrawal by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde of the Out of Hours GP Service in Inverclyde and (2) a request to meet with Inverclyde's constituency MSPs to examine opportunities for additional funding and to re-examine the funding Inverclyde receives.
- 2.3 Copies of the relevant correspondence are attached at Appendices 1, 2 and 3 and the report updates Members on the current position.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Executive Sub-Committee notes the current position with regard to the Council's engagement with the Scottish Government on (1) the temporary withdrawal by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde of the Out of Hours GP Service in Inverclyde and (2) the request to meet with Inverclyde's constituency MSPs to examine opportunities for additional funding and to re-examine the funding Inverclyde receives.

Gerard Malone
Head of Legal & Property Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee at its meeting on 7 April 2020 agreed that a report be submitted to its next meeting on any outstanding items of representation made by the Council to the Scottish Government.
- 4.2 Two items in respect of which the Council is engaged with the Scottish Government have been identified, being (1) the temporary withdrawal by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde of the Out of Hours GP Service in Inverclyde and (2) a request to meet with Inverclyde's constituency MSPs to examine opportunities for additional funding and to re-examine the funding Inverclyde receives.
- 4.3 The Leader of the Council and the Convener of the Health & Social Care Committee wrote to Professor John Brown CBE, Chair of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, on 27 February 2020 seeking an urgent review of the Board's decision to temporarily withdrawal by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde of the Out of Hours GP Service in Inverclyde, requesting details of the operation of the voluntary transport service and the implementation of home visits and asking how the impact of the service reduction will be monitored (Appendix 1).
- 4.4 The response from Professor Brown, received on 9 March, indicated that the suspension of the Out of Hours GP Service is temporary, that anyone who urgently needs to see a GP outwith normal hours is still covered by one of the other core centres and that transport can be arranged through the patient transport service. He also confirmed that the GP home visiting service is available for those too unwell to travel. He further advised that services in Inverclyde will be reinstated as soon as there is capacity to do so. There is a sustained recruitment campaign for more salaried GPs and work is ongoing to identify a model that will work for Inverclyde (Appendix 2).
- 4.5 The Depute Leader of the Council wrote to Stuart McMillan MSP on 31 January 2020, following publication of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) by the Scottish Government on 28 January 2020, seeking a meeting with Inverclyde's constituency MSPs to examine opportunities for additional funding and to re-examine the funding Inverclyde receives (Appendix 3). A response has been received with availability of possible dates and a telephone conference is currently being arranged.
- 4.6 The Executive Sub-Committee is requested to note the current position with regard to the Council's engagement with the Scottish Government on (1) the temporary withdrawal by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde of the Out of Hours GP Service in Inverclyde and (2) the request to meet with Inverclyde's constituency MSPs to examine opportunities for additional funding and to re-examine the funding Inverclyde receives.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Finance

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

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

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

5.2 Legal

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

5.3 Human Resources

There are no Human Resources issues arising from this report.

5.4 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

5.5 Repopulation

The availability of an Out of Hours GP Service may affect people's decisions to reside in Inverclyde.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

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

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

Councillor Stephen McCabe
Municipal Buildings
Greenock
PA15 1LX

Councillor Robert Moran

Leader of the Council

Convener: Health & Social Care Committee

APPENDIX 1

Professor John Brown, CBE
Chair
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
J B Russell House
Gartnavel Royal Hospital Campus
1055 Great Western Road
GLASGOW
G12 0XH

Direct Line: 01475 712727
Email: stephen.mccabe@inverclyde.gov.uk
Our Ref: SMcC/RM/sc
Your Ref:
Date: 27 February 2020

Dear Professor Brown

Withdrawal of Out of Hours GP Service Greenock Health Centre and Inverclyde Royal Hospital

We write to express our deep disappointment with the Board's decision to temporarily withdraw the Out of Hours GP Service in Inverclyde and to ask for an urgent review of this decision.

As you will be aware, Inverclyde has areas of significant deprivation, including the most deprived datazone in Scotland. This significant deprivation means that Inverclyde residents suffer some of the worst health and related outcomes in the NHS GG&C Board area. It is difficult to understand how a decision impacting on some of the most deprived areas in Scotland can be made without an equality impact assessment to truly understand the impact on our communities.

Residents of Inverclyde also have some of the lowest levels of car ownership in Scotland and travel to the Royal Alexandra Hospital (RAH) in Paisley will cause significant difficulties for many residents. For those not in possession of a car, or the support of family and friends, travel to the RAH would include a train journey to Paisley Gilmour Street and a bus or taxi for the remainder of the journey as the RAH is not within easy walking distance of the station. Clearly trains and buses would not be available outwith normal operational hours.

We understand that a voluntary transport service may be available to Inverclyde residents travelling to Paisley. We would request details of the hours of operation of this service and what assurances you can give that volunteer drivers will be available at all times, as required, and these journeys will take place in a timely manner.

Whilst we understand that home visits will still be available, we would, again, seek assurance that these visits will be triaged as priority and would ask that you provide us with information on how the prioritisation will be implemented across the Clyde area – specifically, will a car be stationed at all times within the Inverclyde area?

/...

2.

27 February 2020

Professor John Brown, CBE

We understand this decision was made on a contingency basis. How long do you expect the people of Inverclyde to be without a local GP Out of Hour Service? How will you monitor the impact of this service reduction, particularly on the accident and emergency service at Inverclyde Royal Hospital and the people of Inverclyde?

We would welcome your early response to the points raised above.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Stephen McCabe
Leader of Inverclyde Council

Councillor Robert Moran
Convenor
Health and Social Care Committee

APPENDIX 2

Date: 9th March 2020
Our Ref: JJB/GD

Enquiries to: John Brown
Direct Line: 0141-201-4410
E-mail: JJBrown@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

**Councillor Stephen McCabe and
Councillor Robert Moran
Inverclyde Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LX**

Dear Councillor McCabe and Councillor Moran

I am writing in response to your letter dated 27th February 2020 in which you raise concerns regarding the temporary suspension of GP Out-of-Hours services within Inverclyde. I am grateful to you for taking the time to bring your specific concerns to my attention.

First and foremost, I fully recognise and appreciate your concerns regarding the temporary suspension and I want to reassure you that absolutely central to the decision made last week, was that it is a temporary and essential one – to provide a reliable service in the short-term which enables us to focus on implementing a long-term plan to ensure a consistent and safe urgent GP Out-of-Hours service is available.

It is crucial to clarify that anyone who urgently needs to see a GP outwith normal hours is still covered by one of the other core centres. NHS 24 will direct them to their nearest centre. For patients who have no means of transport available, NHS 24 can make arrangements to get them to and from the centre through our patient transport service. In addition to this, our GP home visiting service covers the whole of Inverclyde, meaning if patients are too unwell to travel, a GP can come to see them.

We will reinstate services in Inverclyde as soon there is capacity for us to be able to do so. We have a sustained recruitment campaign for more salaried GPs underway and are working with colleagues in the local area to identify a model that will work for Inverclyde, potentially linking with the local work on the development of a resource hub.

We will monitor the impact of the suspension on other services but we will continue to provide a full home visiting service if patients cannot leave their home and, if they do not have transport, there is a patient transport service to take people to their nearest centre.

While it was a difficult decision to implement a temporary suspension of urgent GP Out-of-Hours, the previous model was simply unsustainable. Ad hoc closures and no consistency in opening hours due to staff shortages runs the risk of patients turning up to find the centres closed, which is something we want to avoid at all costs.

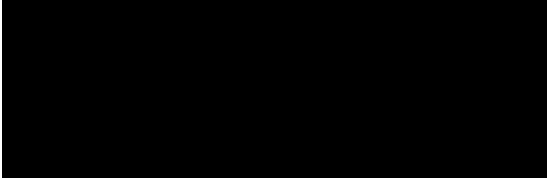
Unfortunately, because of this, we had no other option than to introduce a short-term suspension which will consolidate services and ensure a consistent and stable service can be delivered across the Board area. This will allow urgent GP Out-of-Hours to continue operating until a number of longer term changes can be implemented.

Patient safety is, and will always be, prioritised above all else, and providing safe, effective person centred care remains at the heart of all decisions being made.

In closing, I appreciate your concerns regarding the Inverclyde GP Out-of-Hours service and wish again to assure you this is a temporary arrangement.

I hope my response has been helpful to you. If you have any further concerns, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Professor John Brown CBE
Chairman
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Councillor Jim Clocherty
Ward 4 – Inverclyde North
Municipal Buildings
Greenock
PA15 1LX

Depute Leader of the Council

APPENDIX 3

Stuart McMillan MSP
M4.11
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Direct 01475 712939
Line:
Email: jim.clocherty@inverclyde.gov.uk
Our Ref: JC/dr
Your Ref:
Date: 31 January 2020

Dear Stuart,

I was disappointed to read your attacks on the council and its leadership on the back of the statistical release of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) figures.

Your statement claims you will hold both Inverclyde Council and the Scottish Government to account and then proceeds to highlight multiple achievements of the Government coupled with attacks on the council and its political leadership.

In your haste to criticise the council's lack of vision you have ignored the fact that our vision for the area is part of a partnership agreement delivered through the Inverclyde Alliance.

The partnership involves community councils; Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS; Inverclyde Chamber of Commerce, Greenock and District Trades Council, Job Centre Plus, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Police Scotland, West College Scotland, the voluntary sector representation facilitated by CVS Inverclyde and , of course Inverclyde Council.

You are on the distribution list for all of the meetings, yet I do not remember you attending many meetings let alone putting forward an idea or proposal through that community planning partnership.

I have included a copy of the Inverclyde Alliance outcomes improvement plan (2017-2022) which sets out the vision we and our partners have developed and work towards delivering.

In your statement you highlight a range of achievements of the Scottish Government but do not include the council's role in activity such as the task force leading up to the original takeover of Ferguson Marine and the most recent with the takeover of Texas Instruments by Diodes. Both positive outcomes in protecting jobs and examples where as a council we have worked shoulder to shoulder with Government ministers.

Your most recent example of jobs being saved at Fergusons with the Government takeover of its own failed contracts still has significant questions to answer and with a parliamentary inquiry underway it is perhaps prudent that we do not dig deeper until the results are published.

When it comes to local government finance, I was surprised to see you talk about correspondence with Derek McKay MSP (to whom I have copied this letter) and a commitment from him to the council being encouraged to put forward a special case for funding.

This was news to us and not something you appear to have shared until now. In fact in the many meetings we have had with Government ministers around funding, through the task forces or as part of the wider west of Scotland network focusing on declining populations in this part of the country and the overheating in the East of the country, this has never been raised.

I would be grateful if you could forward a copy of that correspondence and on receipt, I can assure you we will be putting forward a special case for funding following the SIMD results.

As a council committed to working in partnership it is right that we do this as part of the Inverclyde Alliance and involve the wider community to encourage engagement and support.

I hope we can count on both you and Derek as our constituency MSPs to engage in and support that call and to that end I would like to invite you both to meet to examine the opportunities available for additional funding.

Part of that special case I would expect to involve the many cases we have already made to fund initiatives and activity such as the Inverclyde opportunities proposals we presented with a range of interventions and projects and didn't receive anything from that work. That was work that would have supported employment in places like Greenock Town Centre.

In addition, it will be an opportunity to re-examine funding we receive. For example Inverclyde received the lowest award of all Scottish mainland councils from the Town Centre Capital Grant Fund in 2019/20 and when we supported a recent bid to the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) for investment in Greenock Town Centre it was turned down.

You highlighted that the funding formula at COSLA as a source of Inverclyde Council's budget woes but ignore the fact that we do not call for the formula to change. We are looking for a bigger pot for core local government services.

The council has been a consistent voice in supporting the COSLA campaign for a fair settlement for local government in recent years and in pushing for additional investment to reverse cuts and austerity.

That is because there are indisputable facts at play here.

The Scottish Parliament's research service, SPICE, report Local government finance: facts and figures 2013-14 to 2019-20 published in July 2019 showed the scale of cuts to local government in Scotland.

During that time Inverclyde Council's funding was reduced by the equivalent of £104 for every resident.

Nationally the report highlights that the real terms reduction in revenue settlement for Scottish Local Government was 7.5% or £810 million while the equivalent reduction for the Scottish Government was 2.8%.

Inverclyde, of all mainland councils, relies more heavily on income from the revenue settlement. According to the parliament report 72.1% in 2019/20 where other areas rely more heavily on council tax and non-domestic rates income.

In 2013, ring fenced funds to Inverclyde Council accounted for 0.3% of our budget and £0.5m. In 2019/20 that has increased to 4.9% or £8.3m.

Inverclyde funding over that same time has reduced by £13.9m, a decrease of 7.6% which does not in any way correlate with our population change during that time which was only 3.1%.

These are facts produced in the public domain by the Scottish Parliament.

As our MSPs I would expect you and Derek to be as outraged as I am to read this.

When political choices are made there are always consequences.

As a council we have, I am sure you would be the first to agree, made one of the most significant investments in Scotland in the infrastructure of our school buildings. We now, arguably, have the best estate in the country. That choice now means that while our young people are getting a better start in their lives, as the Scottish Government commits to more funding for school buildings we as an area will lose out to the councils that haven't made that investment. I don't criticise them or the Scottish Government for that, but highlight it to show that these are the choices we make and the consequences of those choices.

When the Scottish Government reduces local government core funding consistently for years, there are consequences to that where councils are less able to support our communities when they need us as resources are stretched and front facing services are reduced or cut altogether.

When council's ability to increase income for ten years is stopped there are consequences to that where councils, like Inverclyde, have to rely more on the revenue settlement.

When the Scottish Government ring fences more money for their own priorities there are consequences to that where locally elected councilors choices to spend on local priorities are limited.

The council statement on the back of the SIMD figures aims to highlight that and to press for more core funding and investment to reverse the cuts and put austerity where it belongs in the dustbin of history.

Something I would have hoped we could all agree on.

When it comes to the blame game we can keep pointing fingers but the simple fact is that it means we won't see a turnaround in core local government funding which can and will have an impact on our communities.

When the council is pushing for more funding for our area, I hope we can count on your support and the support of Derek and I look forward to meeting you both.

Regards

Jim Clocherty
Deputy Leader of Inverclyde Council

cc Derek McKay MSP

Please note that my Privacy Notice is available on the Council's website at <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/councillors>.