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CORPORATE ANNOUNCEMENTS

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Colleagues

This note is to update you on the council's plans for dealing with the ongoing outbreak of covid-19, the disease caused by coronavirus.

The first and most important thing to say is that we can all play a role in delaying the spread of covid-19. The most important thing you can do is to familiarise yourself with the Government's advice, and to follow this advice.

You can find the advice here <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19> but in short the advice is:

- If you have travelled to **areas seriously affected** by coronavirus then you should self isolate. The areas which are affected, as well as advice on how to self-isolate, are listed on the government website.
- If you have travelled to some **less affected areas, and you have symptoms** then call 111 and self isolate. The areas which are affected, as well as advice on how to self-isolate, are listed on the government website.
- In any case, **practice good hand hygiene** by regularly washing your hands with hot soapy water for at least 20 seconds. If hot soapy water is not available then use suitable alcohol hand sanitiser as an alternative.

I have convened a **Coronavirus Contingency Planning working group**, chaired by Carole Forrest, the Director of Governance and Solicitor to the Council. The working group has made various recommendations which I shared today with the council's Emergency Committee.

The working group's primary recommendation is that the council will follow the Government's guidance on responding to the outbreak. This means that wherever possible we will take the same actions as the Government. Of course there may be occasions where we are required to make a decision which is not covered by guidance and in those instances the working group will make a recommendation.

We have established a **dedicated space on the council's website to keep you updated**. This will be on our public facing website, in addition to Connect, in order that all staff can access the most up to date information at any time using their own equipment. You can access this at <https://glasgow.gov.uk/staffupdates>

I will try to answer here the most frequently asked questions I have had:

Q: How will you tell me if I need to change how I work?

Each Service and ALEO is considering its own Business Continuity Plan. While we intend to be consistent about how we respond to this, there will clearly be some local circumstances which need to be dealt with at the level of the service or ALEO. Any corporate messages will be

distributed in the normal way, as well as being posted on the council's coronavirus web pages. Any job specific changes will be directly communicated to you by your manager.

Q: Will I still be paid if I need to self-isolate?

If you fall into the very clear categories set out on the government's website, or if you are told to do so by the NHS, then you will be paid.

If you are healthy, but self isolated, because you are in some way at risk then you will be regarded as being on sick leave.

If you actually contract covid-19 then you will be on sick leave as normal but this will not:

- be counted against your sick leave entitlement, and
- will not be used in connection with any Absence Management process.

If you are able to work from home and are self isolated, but not ill, then you will be asked to work from home.

If you have a mobile device such as a laptop, tablet or smartphone then please carry it to and from your work every day and make sure that it is regularly connected to the network at your place of work.

A more **full managers' brief** on this will be issued shortly and also placed on the website.

Q: Will you be making hand sanitisers available?

Many of us already use hand sanitisers as part of our day to day infection control and you should continue to follow those protocols.

For those of us who do not, hand washing with soap and water is preferable as:

- if done properly it is more effective at halting transmission
- we want to make sure that stocks of hand sanitiser are protected so that staff who need them continue to have them.

We are carrying out an audit to determine if there are any areas of business where staff do not routinely have access to hand washing facilities and how best to provide them with alternatives.

Annemarie O'Donnell
Chief Executive

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