

RECORD OF DECISIONS – 27 July 2020

Power Exercised	Date	Reason	Council Function
Suspension of recovery action on Council Tax and Rents Arrears collection for 3 months. This means no summary warrants or wage arrestments will be made and no action will be taken beyond standard reminders being issued	March 2020	Many tenants and council taxpayers across Perth and Kinross will be impacted to some degree by COVID-19 response and may be unable to pay bills timeously or in full. To avoid unnecessary stress for families who may be struggling and potential very negative publicity for the Council it was considered appropriate to temporarily suspend formal recovery action on arrears.	Duty to collect Council Tax and Rent applying all due diligence in doing so.
Closing Registrars Offices to the public	March 2020	To reduce the health risk to staff and public in terms of COVID-19 and in compliance with Government Directions.	Duty to provide a Registrars Service. (Registration of deaths can now be done remotely.)
Closing Council schools	March 2020	To reduce the health risk to staff pupils and public in terms of COVID-19 and in compliance with Government Directions.	Duty to provide Education Services Duty to meet additional support needs.
Closing Council Buildings	March 2020	To reduce the health risk to staff and public in terms of COVID-19 and in compliance with Government Directions.	Duty to provide Council Services.
Closing all Council Recycling Centres	March 2020	To comply with government guidance in relation to the spread of covid 19 by preventing non-essential travel and members of the public from visiting busy sites where social distancing could not be safely implemented.	Environmental Protection Act 1990, duty to provide facilities for the public to deposit their waste.

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Closing all public conveniences	March 2020	Lack of staffing resource and also to minimise the risk of the spread of infection.	No statutory requirement in this case, but seen as an important public service.
Stand down all designated street sweepers	March 2020	Non-essential service. To comply with government Regulations in relation to spread of covid 19 and to protect staff from the risk of infection.	Environmental Protection Act 1990, code of practice in relation to street cleanliness.
Temporary suspension of bulky / special waste collections	March 2020	Lack of staff resource. To allow redeployment of existing resource to essential services.	Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
Suspension of parking charges	March 2020	Lack of staff resource. To allow redeployment of existing resource to essential services and support key workers.	Car Park Traffic Orders.
Reduce road and street lighting maintenance	March 2020	Lack of staff and contractor resource. Non-essential service. To comply with government Regulations in relation to spread of Covid 19 and to protect staff from the risk of infection.	Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 duty to maintain roads and street lighting.
Reduce property maintenance	March 2020	Lack of staff and contractor resource. Non-essential service. To comply with government Regulations in relation to spread of Covid 19 and to protect staff from the risk of infection.	Duty to maintain property.
Changes to school and public transport arrangements/ contracts	March 2020	Changes to school opening times/use as key worker childcare hubs, as per government guidance in relation to spread of Covid 19; Changes to regulated bus services due to lack of contractor	Service Contracts/Traffic Commissioners requirements.

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		resources/passenger uptake.	
Suspension of unplanned repairs except emergency repairs (includes suspension of Right to Repair)	March 2020	Reduce risk to contractors and tenants. Government Regulations require that all but essential work should stop.	
Suspend tenant evictions from residential properties who find themselves in financial or other difficulties as a result of the coronavirus pandemic	March 2020	To comply with new legislation and guidance	
Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 Extension of all licences granted under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 or other legislation for a period of three months.	March 2020	The current circumstances have impacted 1) the ability of licence holders to obtain and produce required documentation (photographs, medicals, Public Liability Insurance); and 2) the ability of staff to process applications and ensure that all relevant documentation has been received.	The processing and granting of licences under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.
Emergency grant to foodbanks	March 2020		Duty to promote social welfare; power of wellbeing.
Free School Meals Payments to families	March 2020	To ensure alternative mechanism to provide meals and comply with duty.	Duty to provide free school meals to eligible children.
Waiving of the 3% increase for burial and cremation charges for 2020/21	March 2020	To assist with costs at difficult time.	
The setting of reserved places for schools for session 2020/21	March 2020	To ensure that reserved places are retained in schools ahead of determining placing requests.	Duty to set reserved places in schools.
Variation to the School Admissions Policy for session 2020/21 in relation to the	March 2020	To ensure that the amended policy is in place prior to determining	Duty to publish admissions policy;

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criteria for placing requests received from out with the local authority area.		placing requests for the coming school year.	duty to determine placing requests.
Reduce provision of temporary accommodation to high risk groups	March 2020	Reduced availability of temporary accommodation due to suspension of housing allocation policy.	
Funding for community initiatives through Local Action Partnerships	March 2020	In order to speed up requests for funding from voluntary groups, decisions will be made only by Chairperson and Lead Officer of LAP, other than the Kinross LAP.	
Business Grants – agreed that small number of businesses who had applied for grants, but were not registered as rate payers at the start of the year, be given grants, subject to evidence checking by the relevant Council Team.	4 April 2020	To ensure service continuity during the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.	
Support for Gypsy / Traveller Communities. Flexibility in approach to negotiated stopping, identification of potential mobile home/holiday sites which may need to be requested to re-open (subject to Gold Command approval), contact to be made with identified sites to ensure no barriers to prevent re-opening. Sites only to be re-opened for the purpose of Gypsy Travellers.	22 April 2020	To provide support to Gypsy / Traveller Communities during the Coronavirus pandemic.	
Pending formal contract negotiations with Stagecoach, local bus service contracts to be paid in line with regular monthly contract payments until June 2020, with a deduction of 13% to reflect fuel usage, in line with the CPT cost index figure, and as a result of the reduced network	22 April 2020	To ensure the continuing provision of local bus services in Perth and Kinross.	

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coverage. Payment approach to be reviewed over the next 2 months in light of any developments arising from the continued Covid-19 pandemic including any further guidance issued by the Scottish Government and/or COSLA.			
Guidance on temporary supplier and provider relief. A suspension of part of the Council's Financial Regulations which states that all advance payments are individually approved by the Head of Finance. The Guidance on Supplier and Provider Relief suspends that requirement for an initial period until 30 June 2020 (or earlier if current restrictions are lifted). The revised arrangements provide that the accountable budget holder for the areas concerned retain discretion over and are responsible for all decisions over supplier and provider relief, subject to a general cap of 25% of the annual contract value.	22 April 2020	The Council is dependent upon its suppliers and providers continuing to deliver critical services as part of the ongoing COVID 19 response. Longer term, the Council also needs to protect its local supply chain.	
Further to previous discussions and following agreement with Stagecoach on local bus provision, offer amended to all operators to 100% payment (April to June 2020) where supported services and/or mileages are being maintained at normal levels (to include changes made to cover emergency network) with a deduction of 13% for fuel for any supported services which are currently suspended. This brings PKC into line, in payment terms, with both Fife and Angus Councils. This will ensure contract variations are	29 April 2020	To ensure the continuing provision of local bus services in Perth and Kinross.	

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completed/signed along with supplier relief proposal form for best value and audit purposes (and any retrospective payment assessments). Payment arrangements applied to all operators including community care providers (total payment approx. £50k per month – predominantly Taxi/PHV operators). These payment arrangements to be reviewed in 2 months time and/or when circumstances/local/national guidance changes.			
It has been decided to delay the previously proposed date for the potential closure of Abernyte Primary School from the end of the current academic session to the end of academic session 20/21.	May 2020	This in no way cuts across the work of the School Closure Review Panel, rather it gives pupils and parents/carers clarity about the arrangements for the end of this school session.	
Availability of PKC Environmental Health Officers to NHS Tayside	May 2020	To support Test and Protect initiative, and similar to Dundee City and Angus Councils, PKC providing six environmental health officers to support NHS Tayside if necessary to assist with contact tracing for a 4-6 week period.	
Fly-Tipping Fund	May 2020	Re-introduction of the Fly-Tipping Fund to assist private landowners and community organisations to tackle the issue in the short-term, with a total fund of £20,000.	
PKC School Session 2020/21	June 2020	The Scottish Government have indicated that the new term for all schools across Scotland should commence on 10 August 2020 for staff and 11 August for children and young people (a week	

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		<p>earlier than had been agreed for PKC). To give parents and staff certainty about the dates for the new academic session, Gold Command agreed to change PKC school start dates in line with this. In addition, it was agreed that there be no in-service days the following week (w/b 17 August). SNCT guidance is being agreed on how these changes will relate to terms and conditions. This guidance will be used to reach a local agreement via the JNCT on holiday entitlement etc for teaching staff, and the JCC for non-teaching staff affected by this nationally directed change. This will include negotiation about necessary changes to previously agreed in service dates.</p>	
<p>Payments for Free School Meals</p>	<p>June 2020</p>	<p>It was agreed at Gold Command to continue with the direct payments for Free School Meals (FSMs) to families who are eligible because of entitlement to certain benefits for the duration of the summer holiday period, using the funding available to support "Holiday Hunger" to offset some of these costs. It was also agreed that when attendance at school resumes from August 2020 these direct payments will continue but the fortnightly payment will be adjusted to reflect the pattern of at school/at home attendance e.g. if</p>	

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		this pattern is week about, the direct payment will be half of what it currently is. For any young person who is able to attend school every week, there will be no direct payment for FSMs made. The direct payments will then be reviewed again in advance of the October break.	
Decision not to pursue outstanding Council Tax debt	June 2020	The Sheriff Court has now resumed but decision made not to pursue outstanding council tax debt or the issuing of reminder letters in the usual way.	
Decision to retrospectively charge for those non-residential care services that have been provided.	June 2020	<p>The decision was based on the need to be consistent with the approach being taken in respect of other charges for Council Services, the fact that charges would only be made for services that were actually provided. Also considered was that this would be a very material write-off and also considerations were made regarding benchmarking data with other Local Authorities.</p> <p>Gold Command were very clear, however, that any invoices will need to be issued with a very carefully worded letter that; recognises the impact of Covid-19; explains why some charges were suspended; recognises that individual circumstances may have changed and people might be experiencing hardship;</p>	

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		and offers support and advice in this regard.	
Approved the write off of debt and obsolete stock and the write on of credit balances set out in the report from the Head of Finance dated 11 June, and which will be included within the Council's Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2020.	June 2020	To comply with the legislative requirement to include the write off of debt information in the Annual Accounts for 2019/2020. The Council Financial Regulations indicate that officers are not authorised to write off debt.	
<p>Education Recovery. Gold Command reviewed and provided comment on the Local Phasing Delivery Plan. They noted that the plan had been developed in full accordance with the national Strategic Framework for Education Recovery. All school plans had been subject to scrutiny and challenge to ensure that the principle of maximisation underpinned each school's individual plans.</p> <p>The Local Phasing Delivery Plan and each school's plan remains subject to change depending on any changes to national public health and scientific advice. It will be submitted to Education Scotland (HMle) on Wednesday 24 June 2020 for review, as per Ministerial direction. Feedback will be provided in due course.</p> <p>Gold Command approved the Local Phasing Delivery Plan, noting it would continue to be subject to change as required.</p>	June 2020	Scottish Government requirement for all local authorities to produce a Local Phasing Delivery Plan.	
Gold Command agreed to continue funding for ALEOs at current levels to October 2020	June 2020	To provide funding to assist with the continued	

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at which point it will be reviewed again. It was also agreed to continue funding for Tayside Contracts until 31 July 2020 in line with our two other Council partners.		operation of these services.	
Gold Command agreed that parking charges are reintroduced on 1 August 2020, to coincide with the further anticipated relaxation of lockdown measures in line with the Scottish Government's Route map for recovery. Gold also agreed to invoke the approved 10% increase in parking charges approved by Special Council on 6th March 2020. An appropriate communications plan will be developed through the press and social media to raise awareness of the reintroduction of charges and that a progressive approach to enforcement is applied in the first week after reintroduction.	June 2020	To implement previously agreed charges and provide clarity to members of the public as part of relaxation of lockdown measures.	
Following the request of Scottish Government to standardise the new term to commence on 11 August 2020, Gold Command approved the proposal that the 2021 summer holidays commence one week early on Thursday 24 June 2021, instead of Thursday 1 July 2021 (inclusive).	June 2020	To provide clarity on revised school term / holiday dates following changes requested at national level.	
There is an outstanding matter relating to council tax for unoccupied properties and which has been raised within the Sounding Board and also via MSP queries. This matter is in part covered by a 2017 Policy statement approved by SP&R Committee which gives the Chief Operating Officer delegated authority to apply a discretionary discount of 10%	July 2020	The approach gives a discount to council tax in certain scenarios which would address some of the appeals. In respect of Holiday/Second Homes, it would ensure consistency of approach across Councils while this matter continues to be debated at national level. And it allows appropriate consideration of other	

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<p>with certain conditions being met. Report 7 17/155</p> <p>The Council has prioritised the release of funds through payment of business grants and then preparation for NDR billing which happened at the end of June. The Council Tax Team have now worked with Finance colleagues on a PKC approach to council tax for unoccupied properties in light of the Covid-19 situation and which has now been considered by the Chief Executive under Emergency Powers. There are number of different types of scenarios. The intention is to apply the following -</p> <p><u>Long Term Empty Properties -</u> A 10% discount be awarded for a 6-month period (with the option to review) or until the works are completed, sale of property is completed, or lease has started. No engagement with the Vacant Property Team required at this time. There are a number of appeals/queries for which would be addressed by this.</p> <p><u>Holiday/Second Homes – Covid -19 -</u> Properties classed as second/holiday homes would not be considered for any discretionary relief due to Covid-19. This reflects the national position and if SG issue revised guidance, then PKC would change their position at that time. There are a number of appeals on this point.</p> <p><u>Unoccupied Properties – Other Circumstances</u> - the approach will be an ongoing review of</p>		<p>scenarios which will emerge via council tax recovery runs.</p>	

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<p>other circumstances by the Council Tax team who will retain a watching brief over appeals/queries and if not covered by any other exemption, these matters will be referred to the Interim Chief Operating Officer in the first instance for consideration of the application of the 10% discretion as provided within the Policy statement.</p>			