

Report

Report to:	Executive Committee
Date of Meeting:	26 May 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	Elected Members Return to Office Accommodation
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to: -

- ◆ Advise Committee of the proposals for Elected Members' return to Office Accommodation

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s): -

(1) that the proposals for elected members return to the office are noted.

3. Background

3.1. As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic all Councils Offices have been closed to the public, with limited exceptions, in line with Scottish Government and Health advice. Elected members and employees were encouraged to work from home where possible and essential face to face meetings only were permitted.

3.2. The Scottish Government Strategic Framework has been updated and restrictions are easing as the spread of the virus is suppressed and infection rates reduce. Currently the whole of Scotland is in level 3 and whereas working from home where possible and practicable is still recommended, public buildings are starting to re-open, subject to restrictions, for essential services. The Government has published an indicative time- table to move all of Scotland through the levels which is dependent on the virus level and which will be kept under review.

3.3 Currently the anticipated timetable is as follows:

- Move to Level 2 -17 May
- Move to Level 1- 7 June
- Move to Level 0- Late June

4. Elected Members Return to the Office

4.1. In Level 2 and Level 1 working from home is still the recommended position where possible. The position eases in Level 0 where working from home remains the default position but a phased and limited return to the Office will be permitted.

4.2 The numbers who will be able to attend the office at any time will depend upon the office accommodation and the mitigation measures that the Council is obliged to put in place in terms of the Coronavirus regulations and guidance to reduce the risk of virus transmission and these include requirement to wear a face covering unless the person is exempt ,physical distancing, ventilation, controlled use of entrances,

passageways, stairs and lifts, controlled use of shared facilities such as toilets and cleaning. This will impact upon the numbers allowed at any one time in shared offices or open plan offices. The Corporate safe system of work currently advises anyone who requires a Personal Evacuation Plan to work from home as there may be insufficient staffing levels within the building to evacuate them safely.

- 4.3 COVID-19 Risk assessments and Safe Systems of Work for the Elected Members Accommodation will be prepared in consultation with the Health and Safety Team by 4 June 2021. These will be shared with elected members by email in advance of their return to the office and officers will be available to respond to questions or issues arising.
- 4.4 Given the above mitigation measures it is proposed that a rota is developed for members return to the office on a phased basis once the restrictions are eased to eased to Level 0. Members will still be able to work from home however the rota will be devised on a weekly basis for those who wish to attend the office or need to attend the office to deal with essential business. Assuming that restrictions are eased to level 0 as of 28 June, the first week's rota will be developed in consultation with elected members by 25 June 2021 and weekly thereafter.
- 4.5 Council and Committee meetings will continue to be held virtually until after the summer recess at the earliest.

5 Employee Implications

- 5.1. There are no direct employee implications.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1 There are no climate change implications as a result of this report.

8 Other Implications

- 8.1. None at this stage.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. Consultation on the development of the Rota will be carried out with elected members.

Paul Manning

Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources)

6 May 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ♦ Accountable, effective, efficient, and transparent

Previous References

None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact: -

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