

LAW & GOVERNANCE COVID-19 EMERGENCY PLANNING HIGHLIGHT REPORT

SERVICE AREA:	Law and Governance Directorate – PCC and CCC
REPORT AUTHOR:	Fiona McMillan - Director
REPORTING PERIOD:	27/04/20- 10/05/20

KEY ACTIVITY HEADLINES

- Preparation for first virtual council meetings at PCC following training of officers and members on using Zoom and setting up a PCC You Tube channel-
 - Cabinet – 11 May 2020
 - Planning Committee – 12 May 2020
 - Scrutiny & Overview Committee – 20 May 2020
- A training programme for members has been agreed with priority given to those attending these first meetings
- Organising additional joint scrutiny committee meetings to focus on council's Covid-10 response
- At CCC virtual meetings continue with Adults Committee on 12th May and General Purposes Committee on the 14th May
- CCC Democratic Services are working with IT to consider options for facilitating greater public involvement in virtual meetings in advance of review of Virtual Meeting Protocol after 19th May
- Continued testing of both Zoom and Microsoft Teams with officers at CCC and PCC and identifying issues and raising with IT
- Advising on key areas relating to Covid-19 response eg contract and procurement issues
- Assessing forthcoming decision-making at both councils alongside Directors
- Reviewing and advising relevant officers on emerging Coronavirus legislation/guidance across both councils
- Legal teams at PCC & LGSS Law – continuing business as usual including staffing child protection cases in court where a virtual hearing is not possible and attendance for essential sealing of documents
- Supporting the PCC and CCC internal Silver/Tactical and Gold/Strategic emergency planning council-wide groups

RISKS / CHALLENGES (AND MITIGATION)

Key Risks

- Assessing the impact of Covid-19 on major projects against legal requirements
- Assessing security risks of IT platforms for virtual council meetings with ICT and Information Governance teams

Key Challenges

- Continuing to work through technology challenges testing options for different types of virtual meetings and identifying challenges including quality of image and sound alongside security risks and training needs for future member meetings

WORKFORCE UPDATE

- Majority of Legal & Governance staff now working from home
- Those that can have been redeployed to front-line working

- Exceptions to this are child protection lawyers who attend court when necessary
- Moved to weekly Microsoft team meetings and daily catch-ups with managers

FINANCIAL IMPACT (increase in costs / reduction in income)

- None so far

RECOVERY ACTIVITY (plans being considered / future steps)

- Considering how we resume full range and type of council meetings as soon as possible once social distancing requirements have been lifted with increased virtual working for non-formal meetings for members and officers
- Potential for hybrid model in the future where some members and officers are physically present in the chamber once restrictions are lifted alongside those who are unable to be present still joining meetings virtually – model has started being used in Parliament

COMMUNICATIONS

- All Directorate related communications are fed through the daily briefings to staff
- Weekly video team meetings