

EE17. Recovery Arrangements for Employees Returning to Work

The Emergency Executive considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which provided an update on the plans to support employees in their return to work over the different phases of the lifting of the lockdown.

During the Covid-19 lockdown a number of essential services had continued to operate, some being delivered in very different ways. A number of employees in nonessential services had continued to work from home and some had provided support to essential services. There were c.3,200 employees who were self-reporting to be working from home to varying degrees. While c.720 employees reported that they were fit to work but unable to do so for a variety of reasons e.g. caring for a dependent, workplace closure, pregnant/have an underlying health condition or unable to carry out their job at home.

Given the recent announcements by the Scottish Government on the phased lifting of the lockdown, plans were being developed to support a return of employees to the workplace in line with Service recovery plans. It was recognised that delivery of services may require to evolve to ensure all national guidance was taken into account.

Risk assessments would be prepared for all workplaces in advance of them opening to ensure the requirements were met. For phases 1 to 3, working from home was to remain in place as the default position for those who were able to do so and it would still be encouraged in phase 4. A group had been established, chaired by the Head of People, Technology & Transformation, to support services as they implemented their recovery plan. The group had cross-Service representation and would report to Corporate Management Team. The Service Recovery Plans were due to be reported to a future meeting of the Emergency Executive. An update report on employees returning to the workplace would also be prepared following the summer recess.

Throughout the period of the lockdown, a Trade Union liaison group had operated to ensure continued dialogue over key issues. Initially the group met 2 or 3 times per week and now continues to meet on a weekly basis. This group had worked very effectively, ensuring good collaborative working in the development of the wide range of support and frequently asked questions that were available on the Council's website.

Decision

The Emergency Executive noted the work being done to support employees returning to work in line with Service Recovery Plans and that a further update would be provided following the summer recess.