

Report to: **Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development**

Date: **25 January 2022**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Title: **Coronavirus (Covid-19) contingency arrangements**

Purpose: **To review temporary measures in relation to executive decisions agreed by the Leader of the Council in April 2020, and extended in July 2020, as a result of Covid-19 disruption.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Leader is recommended to:

- 1) agree to the continuation of the delegation of authority to the Chief Executive to take any executive decision which she considers appropriate in response to Covid-19; and**
 - 2) review the delegation in July 2022 or as soon as practicable thereafter.**
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1. Background

1.1 In April 2020 the Leader of the Council agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive to take any executive decision which she considers appropriate in response to the outbreak of Covid-19 and that this delegation be reviewed in October 2020. An extension was agreed at the October review, with a requirement that the delegation be reviewed again in July 2021. A further extension was agreed in July 2021, with a requirement that the delegation be reviewed again in January 2022.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The ongoing presence of the Covid-19 virus both nationally and internationally continues to cause disruption to a range of business and social activity. Since March 2020 there has been a need for a wide range of preventative measures to be introduced nationally to help contain the spread of the virus. The measures in place have changed according to the course of the pandemic, sometimes rapidly.

2.2 The ongoing course of the pandemic remains difficult to predict. There remains a risk of further waves of Covid-19, particularly through the winter period, and it is possible that any future spikes in the virus could necessitate a rapid response. The recent reintroduction of measures relating to homeworking, the use of face coverings, self-isolation, and international travel demonstrates that the situation continues to evolve in light of the emergence of new variants of the virus.

2.3 Although arrangements are in place for Lead Member decisions to be taken virtually it may, in certain situations, not be possible or prudent to wait for the Lead Member to take decisions at a formal meeting. It is therefore proposed that the delegation previously agreed by the Leader be extended for a further six months, to July 2022 to ensure that provision continues to be in place to provide for essential urgent executive decisions to be taken in response to Covid-19.

2.4 Where the Chief Executive exercises this delegation and the power exercised is not one currently set out in the scheme of delegation to officers then she will continue to report this decision to the Group Leaders as soon as practicable.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 To ensure that provision continues to be in place to provide for essential urgent executive decisions to be taken in response to Covid-19 the Leader is recommended to agree to the continuation of the delegation of authority to the Chief Executive to take any executive decision which she considers appropriate in response to Covid-19 and that this delegation be reviewed in July 2022, or as soon as practicable thereafter.

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LOCAL MEMBERS: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report to the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development – 2 April 2020

Report to the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development – 29 October 2020

Report to the Leader and Lead Member for Strategic Management and Economic Development – 13 July 2021