

## Community Resilience Group Weekly Briefing - 9 5 March 2021

### Key Messages from the Budget

As outlined by the Council's Chief Executive in the virtual briefing, the Council's budget for 2021/22 was agreed yesterday (4<sup>th</sup> March 2021). Key messages from the budget are:

- The budget recognises the challenges to the economy and society as a result of covid and aims to address the 4 harms of covid – direct health harms, indirect health harms, societal harms and economic harms.
- A number of investment priorities have been agreed to support recovery. This includes:
  - £1.5m investment in Visitor Management Investment in roads, parking management, comfort schemes (to enhance toilet provision), enhanced litter and waste collection, provision for motorhomes
  - £6m Economic Prosperity Fund – focusing on employment opportunities particularly for young people – Modern Apprenticeships, mentoring skills, increasing training and learning opportunities, supporting business to create jobs for people out of work
  - £2.1m Place Based Investment - £100,000 per ward to develop local responses to covid e.g. welfare supports around food and fuel support, wellbeing investments in play parks/leisure facilities, supports around addressing mental wellbeing and loneliness
- A Transformation Strategy has also been agreed to support delivery of the Council's financial strategy and to deliver savings by working more efficiently and effectively
- The budget has protected Council reserves to ensure there are appropriate resources to deal with any emerging risks.
- It was also agreed that there will be no increase in Council Tax 2021/22

A link to the Council's budget papers can be found at the following link:

[www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4398/highland\\_council](http://www.highland.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/4398/highland_council)

### Return to School

Further to the update in last week's briefing about return to school, there was an update this week from the Scottish Government about the timescales for the return of other year groups.

All remaining primary children (P4-P7) will return to school full time from 15 March.

Secondary pupils in stages S1-S3 as well as the already announced S4-S6 will return part time. What this will mean will vary depending on the individual school circumstances taking into account the accommodation, safety, transport and other relevant factors that support the national guidelines.

## Business Grants Update

Eligibility for the Council's Discretionary Business Grant Scheme has been widened and the timescales extended for people to apply to the scheme. Additional funding has been received from the Scottish Government to allow the Scheme to be extended.

The Discretionary Grant Scheme is set up to help micro, small and medium size businesses which are not eligible for grant from any of the current or proposed grant schemes. It is to mitigate the short-term financial challenges being experienced by businesses, who otherwise are unable to secure alternative grant support and have seen a significant reduction in trade – be that goods or services.

The grant scheme remains focused on supporting those businesses who have, for whatever reason, fallen through the funding gaps left by the UK and Scottish Government grant schemes and who have experienced a reduction in trade. The extra funding provided has allowed the Highland Council to lower the percentage of trade lost from 50% to 30%. The grant scheme currently provides a fixed one-off payment of £2,000 per business.

Affected businesses are encouraged to go to the Council's website and to read the guidance to consider whether they are eligible. Bank and business evidence are required when applying.

The deadline for grants to be submitted has been extended until the **19 March 2021**.

For further information about the fund and criteria:

[www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/962/discretionary\\_grant\\_scheme](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/962/discretionary_grant_scheme)

Apply on line:

[www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/962/discretionary\\_grant\\_scheme/2](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/962/discretionary_grant_scheme/2)

## COVID-19 Daily Dashboard

As highlighted previously in these briefings, Public Health Scotland hosts a [COVID-19 daily dashboard](#) on their website which includes a variety of Covid data, including information at neighbourhood level about the number of cases.

From this week, the dashboard also now includes Covid-19 Vaccination data which will be updated daily thereafter. Vaccination information had been published weekly basis in the [Covid-19 statistical report](#) but will now move to daily reporting.

The data will include:

- Total vaccination – daily count and daily cumulative total and dose 1 or 2
- Vaccination by age group and sex including percentage of population to receive 1<sup>st</sup> dose
- Vaccination by location – NHS Health Board and Local Authority area

Vaccination by priority group will be added at a later date.

## **CORA Foundation – Enabling Neighbourhoods and Communities Fund**

The Enabling Neighbourhoods and Communities Fund is a Scottish Government fund worth £500,000 administered by Corra Foundation. The purpose of the Fund is to provide small grants to community and voluntary groups across Scotland who are connecting and supporting people within their local community.

The Fund aims to specifically reach groups who:

- Have strong local relationships.
- Help increase the wellbeing and social connections for communities.

Who can apply?

Community groups, membership groups, voluntary groups, social enterprises, and charities who:

- Have local people leading the delivery of support/activities for the benefit of their community.
- Provide support or activities for their community at no charge and/or small fee.
- Have a volunteer management committee.
- Confirm any potential profits are used to benefit the local community and/or other charitable purposes.
- Groups who do not have a constitution or bank account may still be able to apply. In this case, groups must have a relationship with a local “buddy organisation” who can support their application.

Groups who were established to help meet the needs of their neighbourhood during the pandemic are eligible, as long as they meet other criteria.

Grants are usually between £1,000 – £2,000 (maximum of up to £5,000) and funds will be unrestricted to help groups cover running costs or deliver support or activities in their local area over the next 12 months.

For further information and criteria:

[www.corra.scot/wp-content/uploads/Criteria-Outline-and-Application-Guidance-Enabling-Neighbourhoods-and-Communities-Fund-2-2.pdf](http://www.corra.scot/wp-content/uploads/Criteria-Outline-and-Application-Guidance-Enabling-Neighbourhoods-and-Communities-Fund-2-2.pdf)

How to apply:

[www.tfaforms.com/4882928](http://www.tfaforms.com/4882928)

If you have any questions about applying through a buddy organisation or need any support to complete the form please contact Laura Mathieson [laura@corra.scot](mailto:laura@corra.scot)

### **Vaccination Update**

The latest update from NHS on the vaccine can be accessed at the following link:

[www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine](http://www.nhsinform.scot/covid19vaccine)

A stakeholder briefing from NHS Highland is also attached to this briefing

## Food Support for Groups

We know that a number of you continue to provide support to the most vulnerable in your communities and that most of you already have well defined routes for accessing food to provide this support or are supporting individuals to access their shopping or community fridges/food tables.

If you are struggling to access food to continue support to vulnerable people locally, please do contact us through the policy mailbox and we can look at ways that we can support your group going forward.

Contact: [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)

## Resilience Network Contacts

The first meetings of all of the new resilience networks have now taken place. The next meetings are in the process of being scheduled depending upon what was agreed at the initial meeting and dates will be circulated to all within an area.

Where networks are already in place, should any group not already be involved with this network, the contact details for each is below.

- Caithness –If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Alan Tait at Caithness Voluntary Groups [allan@cvq.org.uk](mailto:allan@cvq.org.uk)
- Sutherland – If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Karina Ross at Highland and Islands Enterprise [karina.ross@hient.co.uk](mailto:karina.ross@hient.co.uk)
- East Ross – Helen Ross, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)
- Black Isle - If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Asia Cielecka at [communities@black-isle.info](mailto:communities@black-isle.info)
- Wester Ross and Dingwall – Dot Ferguson, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)
- Skye and Raasay - If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Fiona Thomson at Skye Community Response Development Team [fiona@portreeandbraes.org](mailto:fiona@portreeandbraes.org)
- Lochaber – Emma Tayler, Assistant Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)
- B&S –If any groups aren't involved and wish to be please contact Karen Derrick [enquires@vabs.org.uk](mailto:enquires@vabs.org.uk)
- Inverness City – David Haas, City Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)
- Inverness Rural – Charles Stephen, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network. For future involvement in this network please contact [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)

- Nairn – Willie Munro, Ward Manager, will facilitate this network For future involvement in this network please contact [policy6@highland.gov.uk](mailto:policy6@highland.gov.uk)

## Helpful Links

Welfare Support Team -

[www.highland.gov.uk/directory\\_record/102970/benefit\\_advice](http://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/102970/benefit_advice)

Self Isolation Support Grant - [www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/940/self-isolation\\_support\\_grant](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/940/self-isolation_support_grant)

Fuel Support Fund

[www.highland.gov.uk/fuelsupportfund](http://www.highland.gov.uk/fuelsupportfund)

Energy Advice

[energyadvisors@hi.homeenergyscotland.org](mailto:energyadvisors@hi.homeenergyscotland.org)

AbilityNet - IT advice or support AbilityNet

Helpline 0800 048 7642.

Business Support Grants -

[www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/945/strategic\\_framework\\_business\\_fund](http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/20016/coronavirus/945/strategic_framework_business_fund)

Covid Resilience Grant Support -

[www.highland.gov.uk/directory\\_record/1422811/supporting\\_community\\_resilience/category/155/grants\\_for\\_community\\_groups](http://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1422811/supporting_community_resilience/category/155/grants_for_community_groups)

HTSI Community Group Helpline

Telephone Number 01349 808022

Winter Conditioning reports -

[www.highland.gov.uk/news](http://www.highland.gov.uk/news)