

West Lothian Integration Joint Board

Date: 30 June 2020

Agenda Item: 14

COVID-19: CANCELLATION OF BOARD MEETING

REPORT BY CHIEF OFFICER

A PURPOSE OF REPORT

To cancel under emergency powers delegated to the Chief Officer the Board meeting scheduled for 21 April 2020 due to the risks and threats posed by coronavirus and the legal restrictions on movement and gatherings.

B RECOMMENDATION

To agree to cancel the Board meeting scheduled for 21 April 2020, noting that the position in relation to future Board and committee meetings will be reviewed and considered as those meeting dates approach.

C SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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| C1 | Directions to NHS Lothian and/or West Lothian Council | A direction(s) is not required. |
| C2 | Resource/ Finance | None |
| C3 | Policy/Legal | Standing Orders |
| C4 | Risk | There is a risk of delay to the conduct of IJB business but items on the work plan have been checked and no significant risks are caused by that delay. |
| C5 | Equality/Health | The report has been assessed as having little or no relevance with regard to equality or the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a result, an equality impact assessment has not been conducted. |
| C6 | Environment and Sustainability | None |
| C7 | National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes | Not relevant |
| C8 | Strategic Plan Outcomes | Not relevant |

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| C9 | Single Outcome Agreement | Not relevant |
| C10 | Impact on other Lothian IJBs | None |

D TERMS OF REPORT

- 1 Following the identification and spread of a novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in China in December 2019, on 30 January 2020 the World Health Organisation declared that the outbreak constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. On 11 March 2020 the World Health Organisation declared a global pandemic. In response, guidance and advice from the UK Government, Scottish Government and NHS was issued frequently and was updated and escalated on an almost daily basis. The UK Parliament passed the Coronavirus Act 2020. On 25 March 2020 the Scottish Ministers enacted the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 which closed business premises and restricted individual rights of movement in an effort to contain the virus.
- 2 The health risks associated with COVID-19 are well-publicised and health advice is issued regularly by and on behalf of the UK and Scottish Governments. The advice is subject to change on a frequent basis. The risks associated with holding meetings of the Board and Audit Risk & Governance Committee and other working groups and boards arise from:-
 - Attendance by members of the public related social contact
 - Assembly of Board, committee and group members and related social contact amongst themselves and with others
 - Gathering of officers and related social contact amongst themselves and with others
 - Officers returning to their workplaces and homes after meetings
 - Members of the public and members returning to their homes or places of work
 - Travel to and from meetings by those not otherwise attending the location of meetings
- 3 Those risks have to be set against:-
 - The continuation of the delivery of vital public services to West Lothian and the need to make the decisions required to do so
 - The statutory decisions that have to be made, often with consequences if deadlines are missed
 - The balance between decision-making by officers and decision-making by members

- The need to be agile and responsive in the face of constantly changing advice and circumstances
- 4 It is recommended that for the moment the Board meeting scheduled for 21 April 2020 is cancelled, for the moment retaining the dates for other board and committee meetings. Those dates can be revisited in light of circumstances prevailing nearer the time and the urgency of board and committee business waiting to be done.
 - 5 There are provisions in Standing Orders to allow for additional or urgent meetings to be called if required. There are also provisions to allow urgent decisions to be taken by the Chief Officer which cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting. That requires prior consultation with the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the Standards Officer.
 - 6 The meetings of other groups will be dealt with as a management and administrative matter by the Chief Officer. Given the pressure and prioritisation of business and the diversion of resources, including staff, those are almost certain to be cancelled for the foreseeable future.

E CONSULTATION

Chair, Vice-Chair, Standards Officer

F REFERENCES/BACKGROUND

Standing Orders

Scheme of Delegations

G APPENDICES

None

H CONTACT

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21 April 2020