

Latest update during the COVID-19 emergency

COVID-19

**Information updates from
Councillors Craig Duncan
and Fraser Macpherson**

Further update – for Tuesday 16th June – from Councillor Fraser Macpherson (West End) and Councillor Craig Duncan (Broughty Ferry) :

EASING THE LOCKDOWN – POSSIBLE DATES

You will know the Scottish Government is easing the lockdown at a different pace from England.

On 28th May, Scotland entered phase one which included: visits to meet one other household; exercising travel limit of five miles; opening of garden centres, recycling centres and golf courses; construction site preparation; childminding and preparations for school reopening.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/lockdown-begins-to-ease-in-phase-1/>

Construction is now moving to the next steps of its industry plan. Workers are allowed to return to sites gradually, while using measures such as physical distancing and hand hygiene.

The next statement on easing is due on 18th June, when phase two may be announced. That may include the full reopening of construction sites and reopening of factories; more shops; meeting people from more than one household; outdoor pubs and restaurants; playgrounds and more non urgent healthcare.

Last week the Scottish Government indicated that the Tourism Industry would restart on the 15th July which should give it enough time to prepare and for people to book holidays. That may indicate that we would fully move to phase three at that time too. Phase three also includes: offices; museums, libraries and gyms; more shops; and hairdressers!

<https://www.gov.scot/news/support-for-tourism-industry/>

Some of this is our estimate of what may happen. None of it is firm and is

subject to the progress we make on suppressing the virus.

NEW SHIELDING ADVICE

People on the shielding list should continue to follow the advice until 31st July but if infection rates are low enough, they may be able to exercise outside from the 18th June.

Support will continue such as free weekly food boxes, access to priority supermarket delivery slots, pharmacy deliveries, or other support through councils.

Those living in nursing or residential care homes will not be allowed to exercise outdoors yet.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-shielding-way-forward-scotland/>

SCHOOL OPENING PREPARATIONS

Staff returned to Dundee schools yesterday as preparations continue to welcome pupils back to the classroom in August, if it is safe to do so.

Some children and young people will be entering school buildings over what would have been the last two weeks of term towards the end of June for key transition stages including entry to P1, S1 and some of the senior phase. However, some of this support for transition will be virtual and continue into the start of next term in August.

Meanwhile, the council's network of eight community support centres will continue to operate over the summer period, providing not only critical childcare for key workers, but also helping to look after some of the most vulnerable children in the city.

As with the rest of Scotland, Dundee City Council is working to open schools from 11th August, with the introduction of a blended learning model involving a mixture of classroom and learning from home.

Laptops and other equipment have been distributed around school communities to assist with learning under the new arrangements.

A new batch around 600 laptops will be fitted with data connections and given to selected households soon in another outreach effort to ensure inclusion for the ongoing home education of pupils.

The council is now carrying out a survey of families to ask their opinions about the home learning experience. Responses will be used to help in the establishment of blended learning from August.

The survey is available at <http://tiny.cc/eirmqz>

SUMMER SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

You will recall we previously mentioned that Willie Rennie MSP had asked the First Minister to provide funding for students over the summer because their

usual jobs were not available. Now the Scottish Government has brought forward early access to £11.4 million of discretionary funds – support for higher education students in financial difficulty – to be administered by colleges and universities.

SAAS has also suspended all new debt recovery actions in respect to grants and bursaries until September for students whose circumstances have changed and may have to return over-payments.

This is a good start but we want the Scottish Government to use SAAS instead of separate hardship funds to make it easier for students.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/summer-support-for-students/>

EXTENSION TO HELP TO BUY HOUSING

More than 2,000 households will be able to buy a new build home as the Help to Buy (Scotland) scheme is extended by a year to March 2022. The scheme focuses on more affordable housing with a maximum purchase price of £200,000. It bridges the gap between lower loan-to-value (LTV) mortgages now obtainable for new builds and the smaller deposits many households now have available to buy a new home.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/extension-to-help-to-buy-scotland-scheme/>

BUSINESS SUPPORT

Small businesses which share properties but do not pay business rates are now eligible to apply for grants. The extension to the Small Business Grant Fund will apply to firms occupying shared office spaces, business incubators or shared industrial units and who lease the space from a registered, rate-paying landlord.

Separately, eligibility has also been extended to companies occupying multiple premises with a cumulative value of more than £51,000. From today, eligible businesses will be able to apply to their local authority for grants of up to £10,000.

It has also been confirmed that the Small Business Grant and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant schemes will close for new applications on 10 July.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/more-support-for-small-business/>

TRAVELLING INTO THE COUNTRY

New public health measures are now in force for travellers into the UK: Residents and visitors entering the UK from abroad must self-isolate for 14 days.

They must supply contact, address and travel details.

There will be fixed penalty notices for anyone failing to comply.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-health-measures-for-travellers-to-scotland/>

INFORMATION

UK Government news: www.gov.uk/search/news-and-communications

Scottish Government Updates: www.gov.scot/news

Dundee City Council updates: www.dundee.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19

Covid community helpline for food, shopping, prescriptions, finances, personal care: People in Dundee on the shielded list only – 0300 123 1403.
People in Dundee who are vulnerable but not on the shielded list – 0800 111 4000

NHS Inform –
<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

NHS Tayside website: www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk

Helpline for those who do not have symptoms but are looking for general health advice Tel: 0800 028 2816.

Health Protection Scotland Guidance –
www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/a-to-z-of-topics/covid-19

Federation of Small Businesses: www.fsb.org.uk/coronavirus

Helpline for small businesses, Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm. Tel: 0300 303 0660.

Ready Scotland Information – www.readyscotland.org/coronavirus

Tayside Cares – www.taysidecares.co.uk

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

This is an anxious and uncertain time but we want you to know that we are here to try to help constituents in whatever way that we can.

CONTACT DETAILS

WEST END WARD – Bailie Fraser Macpherson

Phone – Dundee 459378 (home)

E-mail – fraser.macpherson@dundee.gov.uk

Facebook updates : www.facebook.com/dundeewestend