

Latest update during the COVID-19 health emergency

COVID-19

Information updates from Councillors Craig Duncan and Fraser Macpherson

From Bailie Fraser Macpherson (West End) and Councillor Craig Duncan (Broughty Ferry) :

RESTRICTIONS REVIEW

On Tuesday 2nd February the Scottish Government will announce decisions made on the next phase of the restrictions. This will include whether schools will reopen in the middle of February. It has already been decided to keep schools closed until March in other parts of the UK.

COVID VACCINE UPDATE

Across Scotland the schedule is:

- Groups 1 and 2 – from now until the first week in February.
- Group 3 and 4 – February – middle of February.
- Group 5 – February – beginning of March.
- Groups 6 – 9 – by early May

The second dose will run in parallel from the end of February. 400,000 vaccines every week will be administered from the end of February.

Group 1 – Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers

Group 2 – All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers

Group 3 – All those 75 years of age and over

Group 4 – All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals

Group 5 – All those 65 years of age and over.

Group 6 – All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality. This also includes unpaid carers.

Group 7 – All those 60 years of age and over

Group 8 – All those 55 years of age and over

Group 9 – All those 50 years of age and over

For details of the progress of the vaccination programme:

<https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/>

ISOLATION HOTELS AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Non-UK residents from red list countries which are already subject to a UK travel ban will be refused entry.

Those who cannot be refused entry will need to stay in managed isolation in a hotel for ten days.

Anyone who does not have a valid reason for travel out of the UK will be directed to return home and may face a fine.

All country exemptions (sometimes referred to as Travel Corridors) have been suspended until further notice.

Passengers travelling to Scotland from outside the Common Travel Area must have a valid negative COVID-19 test result, taken no more than three days before the scheduled time of departure.

You must self-isolate for 10 full days if you arrive in Scotland from a country outside the Common Travel Area (UK, Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man).

Travel to or from Scotland without a reasonable excuse is not permitted.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-health-checks-at-borders/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tougher-border-controls-to-protect-public-health>

DRAFT BUDGET 21-22

The Scottish Government's draft budget for next year increases funds for most areas in line with the increased overall funds available. These are the notable changes in tax and spend:

- Finance to encourage local authorities to leave council tax frozen for 2021/22.
- Public sector workers earning up to £25,000 can receive at least a 3% pay increase via a £750 cash underpin, while there is a 1% rise for those earning above that amount, capped at £800 above £80,000.
- A new Green Workforce Academy and a Green Jobs Fund.
- A new £55 million programme to support town centres and community-led

regeneration projects.

- Doubling the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund, helping tourist attractions and local communities make improvements to cope with increased visitors.
- Local Authority Discretionary Fund for business support will be doubled to £60 million in this financial year.
- Businesses eligible for the Strategic Framework Business Fund will receive full Level 4 payments on 22nd February, regardless of any future changes to local restrictions.

<https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-budget-2021-22/>

Income tax bands:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-income-tax-2021-2022/>

WEDDING SUPPORT

In recognition of the ongoing challenges faced by the wedding sector, a further £10 million has been added to the £15 million announced in December. Open for applications now, the fund provides one-off grants of up to £25,000 for eligible businesses which includes venues and the supply chain.

<https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/service/funding/scottish-wedding-industry-fund>

FLU

The flu vaccination programme for those outside the most at risk groups has been suspended. The Chief Medical Officer has advised that overall levels of seasonal flu are very low. The vaccination of the most at risk groups has largely been completed but you can check here:

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/flu>

£500 PAYMENT

As previously announced, there is to be a £500 one off payment for all health and care staff. The one-off pro-rata non-consolidated £500 will be payable to all directly employed NHS staff, as well as bank workers and locums paid through NHS Payrolls who have had at least one month's continuous service in the NHS Scotland between 17th March and 30th November 2020. The payment will be based on average hours over the qualifying period, or over the time in service during the qualifying period, capped at a maximum of £500.

The payment will also be made to staff on COVID Special Leave or who are shielding, on sick leave for other reasons or on maternity leave. Staff will receive their bonus payment in February salaries. However, if the lump sum payment will have an adverse effect on benefits, paid by the Department for Work and Pensions, staff can opt to receive their payment in equal instalments over a three-month period February to April.

STUDENT RENT REBATES AND HARDSHIP FUNDING

Students experiencing hardship as a result of coronavirus will be supported by £20 million fund. A further £10 million has also been allocated to universities and colleges for income lost in providing rent rebates. To complement the additional £30 million, the Scottish Funding Council is also repurposing £5 million of student support funding towards discretionary

funding for FE students in the college sector. This is support that we called for.

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

BUSINESS FUNDING

Strategic Framework Business Fund

Applications are made through the council. A business only has to apply once and they will then receive the four-weekly recurring grant for as long as they remain eligible:

- temporary closure grant – £2,000 or £3,000 for those required to close by law
- business restrictions grant – £1,400 or £2,100 for those that can remain open but is specifically required to modify its operations by law

Top up grant

Some of those who receive the Strategic Framework Business Fund will also receive a top up grant. Restaurants, bars, pubs, licensed social and sports clubs, cafes and hotels are in scope for the hospitality top up payment. Other accommodation providers (self-catering, B&Bs, guesthouses, campsite and caravan parks) are not eligible.

- £25,000 for larger hospitality businesses on top of the 4-weekly £3,000
- £6,000 for smaller hospitality businesses on top of the 4-weekly £2,000
- £9,000 for larger retail and leisure businesses on top of the 4-weekly £3,000
- £6,000 for smaller retail and leisure businesses on top of the 4-weekly £2,000

The following sector specific targeted grant schemes are now live:

- Taxi and Private Hire Fund – the Universal Credit benefits grant condition has been removed. Councils will approach eligible drivers so they do not need to apply.
- Creative Freelancer Hardship Fund
- Museums Recovery and Resilience Fund Top up
- Travelling Show People Support Fund
- Culture Collective Fund
- Youth Arts Access Fund
- Creative Communities
- Sector and Destination Operational and Market Readiness fund
- Scotland Pivotal Event Business Fund

Funds going live this month are:

- Mobile Close Contact Services Support Fund including driving instructors and hairdressers
- Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund
- Outdoor Tourism Sector Recommissioning Fund
- Travel Agents Fund
- Wedding Sector Support Fund
- Events Industry Support Fund
- Grassroots Music Venue Stabilisation Fund

- Brewer Support Fund
- Indoor Football Centres Fund

Funds due to go live in February are:

- Tour Operators Fund
- Visitor Attractions Fund
- Ski Centre Support Fund
- Visitor Accommodation Hostels Fund
- Large (7 or more guests) Self-Catering Grant
- Exclusive Use Grant Self-Catering

All self-catering properties, B&Bs and guest houses that pay non-domestic rates are eligible for regular payments through the SFBF. Support equivalent to the SFBF will also be available to these B&Bs which pay council tax.

The £7 million funding for the self-catering sector will be used to offer one-off grant support of £2,000 to self-catering businesses sleeping seven or more guests and additional one-off grant support of £10,000 to exclusive use premises.

The £60 million Local Authority Discretionary Fund enables councils to allocate support to specific groups or sectors that are important to their local economies.

www.findbusinesssupport.gov.scot

Childminders

Grants of up to £1,000 each will be made to eligible childminding providers, and work is now underway with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to finalise the details of the scheme.

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

LOCAL CASES

You can access local information on the spread of the virus in your council area then choose Dundee City from the menu in local neighbourhoods.

https://public.tableau.com/profile/phs.covid.19?fbclid=IwAR1IzNvu3sjbCI6NCjU7mY-Pebmk7eWkh0P0ijzppS-pdQ1l6YllQD0_wpY#!/vizhome/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Overview

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS

If you have symptoms of the virus check out this link.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-guide-coronavirus-covid-19>

POLICE CONTACT FORM

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/covid19/>

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

NHS

Inform

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<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 has been 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

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