



Glasgow City Council

**Environment, Sustainability and Carbon Reduction
City Policy Committee**

Item 2

24th November 2020

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods and Sustainability

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & TRADING STANDARDS COVID-19 REPORT

Purpose of Report:

To update Committee on the enforcement and supporting role provided by Environmental Health & Trading Standards during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recommendations:

That the Committee notes the content of the report and that resources are being reviewed and strengthened as part of the ongoing COVID response. This includes the requirement for business as usual to commence in full in the future and in accordance with national guidance. This will be carried out in conjunction with the Council family review and as part of service recovery planning.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Environmental Health function is charged with responsibilities under the Public Health (Scotland) Act 2008. This renders the Council (Neighbourhoods and Sustainability) liable to act in circumstances where public health is endangered – particularly in relation to the control of infectious disease. The aforementioned Act empowers and obliges National Health Service Boards and Local Authorities to work together to protect and improve public health and to collaborate in the control of infectious disease. This partnership is enshrined within the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Joint Health Protection Plan.

In May 2020, a Joint Statement from the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, the Health and Safety Executive and Local Authorities said:

“The Scottish Government has taken legislative powers to address the public health emergency arising from COVID-19. Amongst these, are powers allowing local authorities and Police Scotland to take action where premises that are required to be closed are not, or where those that can remain open are failing to meet requirements for safe physical distancing. Action to suppress transmission of COVID-19 at work can also be required by existing law under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSW Act).”

In the light of this, Environmental Health and Trading Standards staff were authorised under the relevant Regulations. The Joint Statement went on to say:

“HSE and local authority environmental health teams can apply their expertise and use powers under the HSW Act to protect people at work. Working together, HSE and local authorities have agreed to allocate enforcement on the same basis as that of existing health and safety legislation. In general, local authorities are the main regulator for retail, wholesale distribution and warehousing, hotel and catering premises, offices, and the consumer/leisure industries. HSE is the regulator for other premises including manufacturing, construction, waste and sites subject to major hazards legislation”

- 1.2 In essence, Environmental Health has powers under the Covid Regulations, the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Public Health (Scotland) Act. (The last specified Act also empowers Environmental Health to investigate outbreaks in businesses in which the HSE is the enforcing Authority for Health and Safety at Work.)

Trading Standards are empowered under the Covid Regulations and are also authorised under the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974.

2. KEY CHALLENGES – OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic of 2020 upon Environmental Health has been particularly great given that the service must not only adapt and strive to maintain business-as-usual but must also perform its statutory role in working to suppress the pandemic in the community and in other areas of the Council.

As a consequence, the profile of duties undertaken by Environmental Health has changed radically since March 2020. Key duties including the food safety inspection of businesses and health and safety enforcement in private sector workplaces were stopped almost completely – and have yet to recommence.

- 2.2 The core Environmental Health challenges and associated activities since March 2020 have related to the need to perform the exponentially increasing Environmental Health role in suppressing infectious disease while also maintaining an acceptable business-as-usual service (in the face of a continuing demand for the latter).

A very considerable proportion of Environmental Health and Trading Standards resource has been directed to Covid-suppression activity since March, including the following:

- a) Development and delivery of a Covid enforcement strategy;
- b) Fulfilling Environmental Health's (EH) statutory role within the IMT process;
- c) Engaging with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and other relevant Local Authorities to integrate EH within the national Test and Protect Process – most specifically in relation to contact tracing;
- d) Engaging in joint-working with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde – having 5 Environmental Health officers embedded within the National Test and Protect system;
- e) Performing the role of enforcement body under the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Act 2020 and the Health and Safety at Work Etc Act 1974. This role is shared with Trading Standards colleagues;
- f) Responding to service requests, allegations and complaints regarding non-compliance with Covid legislation and guidance. This role is shared with Trading Standards;
- g) Providing advice and guidance to N&S (and other Council) colleagues in key worker positions to facilitate infection control;
- h) Engaging with colleagues in Corporate Procurement and Corporate Health and Safety to design and deliver a Corporate Covid PPE Procurement Process with EH applying a triage assessment to all requests for Covid-related PPE across the Council;
- i) Developing Covid-19-related procedures to facilitate partial continuation of business-as-usual (see above);
- j) Daily monitoring of the Temporary Mortuary facility;

Limited Business-as-usual

- Response to critical food safety intelligence and notifications of food poisoning.
- Response to critical health and safety service requests and notifications of workplace accidents.
- Monitoring of high-risk fly-tipping hotspots throughout the city.
- Responding to key Public Health related service requests.
- Trading Standards has had to suspend a number of activities including; installation of call blockers in vulnerable people's homes, test purchasing activity to verify compliance with legislation, inspections except for public

safety, however has continued to investigate breaches of consumer protection legislation and provide business advice.

3. COVID ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

- 3.1 A Covid Enforcement Strategy was created, establishing the overarching approach to enforcement of the various Covid-related Regulations and associated guidance. The approach is a mixed strategy with a range of both proactive and reactive activities. Environmental Health and Trading Standards have received and acted upon approximately 1200 requests and allegations from the public, businesses, elected members and other agencies such as Police Scotland and the Health and Safety Executive. Additionally, the proactive component of the strategy has seen a greatly increasing reliance upon surveillance. Some of this work has been conducted in partnership with Police Scotland. This has been particularly helpful during night-time patrols of high Covid-risk licensed premises.
- 3.2 The Strategy also sets out the objective of engaging with as many Glasgow businesses as possible. This includes a Covid Risk Assessment Tool which identifies those businesses presenting the highest risk of non-compliance with the restrictions. Over 980 such businesses were contacted and engaged with on a systematic basis between April and June. During the early weeks of the pandemic, engagement was largely via telephone and email. However, since July, the process has become largely one-off on-site assessments. The process includes the completion of a specially-created assessment checklist which allows officers to assess the levels of awareness, preparedness and compliance at each business. An escalation mechanism then addresses those businesses where compliance is suspect. Continuing non-compliance may result in enforcement action.

4. THE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM PROCESS

- 4.1 The methodology for dealing with incidents of public health concern in Scotland is the instigation of the Incident Management process. This routinely requires the establishment of a Problem Assessment Group (PAG) followed by the convening of an Incident Management Team where appropriate. Environmental Health is a core member of any IMT convened for the purposes of investigating and controlling an outbreak of infectious disease. IMTs are led by NHS Public Health Consultants (or Public Health Scotland or Health Protection Scotland if necessary). Membership of an IMT must always include an EHO and may also include representatives of a range of agencies and professions as required.
- 4.2 Environmental Health in Glasgow might expect to be involved in around 4 to 8 IMTs in any given year. However, since the easing of lockdown restrictions, the demand for Environmental Health participation in IMTs has increased considerably – often seeing 2 or 3 per week and sometimes more than one per day. This is especially the case since the return of children to school in August and the return of students to colleges and universities in September. The key

function of Environmental Health in IMTs is often the on-site assessment of the environment where the outbreak has occurred. The focus is usually upon the identification of weaknesses in preventative measures and ensuring that the environment is made safe in order to prevent further spread on infection.

5. TEST AND PROTECT

- 5.1 Scotland's Test and Protect (T&P) system was created to capture the identity of all positive cases of Covid-19, contact these 'index cases' and establish the identity of all those persons with whom they have come into close contact during their period of infectivity. All 'close contacts' are then duly contacted and given advice – in particular in relation to self-isolation.
- 5.2 NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde requested that the 6 Local Authorities within the Health Board area contribute EHOs to the contact tracing workforce. Glasgow duly contributed 6 EHOs. The officers underwent a training process and began operating as contact tracers. Their role has, however, transitioned to an extent in recent months as the links between cases and hospitality and other workplaces has become more apparent. They are now operating as an invaluable conduit between the T&P process and the workplaces linked to cases as they arise. This function has become essential to both T&P/NHS and Environmental Health as it enables investigation to be undertaken timeously in hospitality venues and other workplaces where cases of Covid occur. This also allows the information on customers visiting venues such as restaurants and bars to be captured and relayed back to the T&P database for subsequent contact tracing to occur.

6.1 HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Takeaways

- 6.1 The hospitality industry has been subjected to considerable scrutiny during the pandemic and was effectively closed during the initial lockdown phase in March 2020. At that point, the only businesses in the catering sector permitted to trade were hotels and takeaways. Recognising the need for adherence to physical distancing requirements and the potential impact upon food hygiene, Environmental Health commenced a programme of engagement with takeaway operators. Over 800 such businesses were contacted by phone and arrangements discussed. Relevant advice was provided and published guidance signposted.

6.2 Easement of Restrictions

When a large portion of the hospitality industry was permitted to re-commence trading during the summer, it fell to Environmental Health and Trading Standards to ensure that all businesses were operating in accordance with the current Covid Regulations and Guidance. To this end, a programme of mass engagement was developed – setting out the process whereby Environmental Health and Trading Standards would contact and/or visit hospitality businesses including restaurants, bars, hotels etc in order to assess compliance.

Acceleration of the Engagement Programme

6.3 The imperative to assess all such businesses was heightened in September when the Covid-19 infection rates in Glasgow began to increase and a sharper focus was placed upon the hospitality sector by the National Incident Management Team and the Scottish Government. This coincided with the end of the temporary closure of hospitality premises within the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council areas. At this point, the Council was required to offer assurance to the Scottish Government that Glasgow businesses were compliant and not generating an unacceptable level of spread of infection. The aforementioned engagement programme was accelerated in order to pre-empt any further imposition of restrictions and by the end of a 4-week period, a total of 919 hospitality businesses had been assessed by Environmental Health and Trading Standards. A total of 1901 businesses have now been proactively assessed and advised since the start of the lockdown period in March 2020.

6.4 Enforcement Activity

During the 919 visits made to hospitality businesses, it was only deemed necessary to serve 2 Prohibition Notice under the Covid-19 Regulations. This is a reflection upon the initial levels of compliance by businesses and the fact that the approach taken by the Council was one of engagement, advice and assistance. Only where there was continued or serious non-compliance was the threat of formal enforcement action considered necessary. Generally speaking, levels of compliance in this sector have been good with operators making significant efforts to operate within the restrictions placed upon them by the Regulations and national, sectoral Guidance. Where shortcomings were identified, operators were advised verbally with requirements and recommendations confirmed in writing via email.



Public house showing typical Covid mitigation measures

Cafes and Restaurants

- 6.5 A number of additional restrictions were placed upon the hospitality sector in several Health Board areas in the Scottish central belt on 9th October 2020. Amongst these restrictions was a requirement for licensed bars and restaurants to close. An exemption from this requirement was, however, granted for licensed cafes. The absence of a clear legal definition of a café led to some debate with business operators who continued to trade despite a requirement to close.
- 6.6 A total of 1331 visits were made to hospitality premises in the City during the days following the 9th October in order to ensure compliance with these new, temporary restrictions. Any licensed café business found to be trading illegally was approached and advised of the Council's view.
- 6.7 Following a series of written (e-mailed) and verbal warnings to these businesses, it was proposed that formal Prohibition Notices would be served on the remaining few which continued to operate. Before any Prohibition Notices could be served, however, the operators of 5 businesses lodged writs seeking interim interdicts at the Sheriff Court. In the first of these instances, the Sheriff considered, on balance of convenience, that the business was, indeed, a café. The Sheriff duly granted the interim interdict, thus preventing the Council from serving a Prohibition Notice to require the business to cease trading. Following the submission of further writs, the Council undertook to desist from the service of Prohibition Notices in relation to these businesses.

7. LEISURE SECTOR

- 7.1 As part of Environmental Health's broad scanning role in relation to the control of Covid-19, the service identified a number of sectors which, when recommencing during lockdown easement, would represent the highest risk of transmission. One of these was the gym and leisure sector. Given the nature of the activity conducted in gyms, the potential for transmission of Covid-19 is significant. As a consequence, it was agreed that Environmental Health would embark upon a project to engage with the operators of all gyms within this city. This project encompassed both private operations as well as facilities managed by Glasgow Life.
- 7.2 A total of 60 gym/sport facilities were identified. Ten of these facilities are operated by Glasgow Life, another nineteen operated by seven national companies. Another six facilities are located within hotels and the remaining twenty-five are private sector sports facilities which are either franchises or independent.
- 7.3 The aim of the project was to establish contact with all operators, request sight of preventative measures and/or risk assessments, assess these documents and conduct on-site checks to a sample of locations in order to verify their implementation.

- 7.4 At the time of writing, assessment has been made of procedures provided by Glasgow Life, six of the seven national companies, five hotel gyms and twenty-four private sector gyms. This accounts for 57 of the 60 facilities in the city.



- 7.5 Site visits have been conducted to one Glasgow Life facility, one facility from five of the seven national company gyms, one hotel gym and one independent gym. Remote questionnaires have been conducted by phone call to five other independent gyms. Further visits have been arranged at another seven independent gyms.
- 7.6 Overall, sports facilities have adapted well to COVID-19 control measures and there has been good compliance from the sports facilities with the sectoral guidance produced by the Scottish Government as well as guidance produced by Sportscotland.

Key issues assessed during visits are:

- Physical Distancing
- Appropriate use of Face Coverings
- Hand Washing/Sanitising Facilities
- Cleaning Arrangements
- Ventilation
- Hygiene
- Member Engagement
- Gym Classes

8. SCHOOLS

- 8.1 When city schools commenced term in August, an anticipated flurry of cases and clusters arose at educational settings. While there was relatively little evidence for in-school transmission at the initial phase, instances of spread within schools became more prevalent. During August and the first half of September, the NHS convened several Incident Management Teams – each dealing with a separate school or apparent outbreak. Environmental Health participated in all such IMTs. At that stage, it was evident that visits to individual

settings would be necessary in order to assess the situation on-site and to advise Head Teachers and the IMT of any perceived weaknesses in measures in place.

- 8.2 After several such visits had been undertaken, it was agreed that a series of pre-arranged visits to schools should be undertaken and a report provided to the Executive Director of Education. Environmental Health conducted assessment visits at 7 locations – each had been identified by Education Services as representative of the different types of settings.
- 8.3 Prior to the commencement of the visits, Environmental Health met with counterparts in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The HSE has enforcement responsibility for workplace safety at schools. Given the obvious overlap in interests, it was deemed appropriate to confer in order to ensure there was no duplication of effort and that findings could be shared.

The inspections focused on the following issues:

- Physical distancing (Staff)
 - Face Coverings
 - Handwashing/sanitising Facilities
 - Seating arrangements (Classrooms)
 - Seating arrangements (Dining Halls)
 - Seating arrangements (Staff Rooms)
 - Cleaning chemicals
 - Cleaning arrangements (Staff areas)
 - Cleaning arrangements (Pupil desks etc)
 - Cleaning arrangements (Common areas)
 - Pupil engagement
 - Pupil movements
 - Pupil transport
 - Ventilation
 - ASL Schools
 - Catering staff
 - Good practice
- 8.4 A final report on the inspection findings was passed to the Executive Director of Education.

9. STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

Pre-emptive Activity

- 9.1 The student accommodation sector in Glasgow is very large and ranges from the traditional halls of residence and cluster flats with shared facilities to self-contained studios. The vast majority of units lie within the University/College halls of residence and Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) sector, with an excess of 5,000 flats in Glasgow between these providers alone. The return to the city of the large diverse student population, whilst welcome, was identified as having the potential to generate an additional spike in Covid-19 cases.

- 9.2 Environmental Health undertook a programme of proactive Covid infection control assessments, based on the Scottish Government Guidance for this sector. This process was greatly assisted by colleagues in DRS Houses in Multiple Occupation team. Information, including Covid suppression measures and risk assessments, was obtained from accommodation providers. A series of interviews were then conducted with the operators. The information obtained was reassuring. It was evident that a great deal of consideration and preparation had taken place ahead of students' return.



Images courtesy of Downing Students and Derwent Students respectively

NHS/University/Environmental Health Liaison

- 9.3 Environmental Health also participated in a forum which included representatives from the City's universities as well as a Consultant in Public Health Medicine from NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The forum was used to discuss likely scenarios for university and accommodation outbreaks. Environmental Health also reported upon the levels of readiness at the various accommodation settings across the city.

Student Behaviour

- 9.4 A theme that emerged and was echoed by each provider was, student behaviour. While significant efforts had been made by accommodation providers to prevent the spread of Covid-19, what could not be controlled was the behaviour of the students.
- 9.5 The vast majority of students have adhered to the rules. However, a number of providers have had to involve Police Scotland over 'house party' incidents and some providers have employed additional night-time security in a bid to help stop students from various different households having parties.

Outbreaks at Student Accommodation

- 9.6 The issue surrounding the behaviour of students within the residences was highlighted in September when an outbreak occurred the University of Glasgow's halls of residence. This was due to a number of parties which took place during fresher's week, which were quickly broken up by the providers and Police. However, by then the damage had been done.

- 9.7 Over 500 students tested positive with a considerable number of other students who had to self-isolate as part of a household group. A further outbreak also occurred at Caledonian Universities' halls of residence, however, this was the result of general household mixing rather than as the result of students having large parties.
- 9.8 Environmental Health were involved in both of the Incident Management Teams (IMT) for these outbreaks. Visits were carried out at residences by Environmental Health to make objective assessments of onsite control measures and to provide feedback to the IMT on their findings.
- 9.9 These outbreaks were eventually brought under control. However, as students go about their day-to-day business we will continue to see small sporadic household clusters within the student accommodations, as the prevalence of Covid continues to increase within the community. The student accommodation sector will, in effect, mirror what happens on a daily basis within the community. The Covid controls already in place within the properties should ensure that no further onward transmission will occur so long as further *superspreader* parties continue to be suppressed.

Further engagement

- 9.10 Further engagement work with the Glasgow Educational Institutions, GGC Public Health Protection Unit and Environmental Health has been undertaken in relation to outbreak management. Advice has been provided in relation to contact tracing and standard letters produced which can be used in the event of students testing positive.
- 9.11 A number of 'lessons learned' from the two outbreaks are to be shared with the rest of the institutions. These will centre around enhanced cleaning regimes in common areas, continuing to provide cleaning within Covid positive households and ensuring that adequate welfare provisions are in place for students who are isolating.

10. INTRA-COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

Covid PPE Procurement

- 10.1 During the early stages of lockdown, the demand for Covid-related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) increased hugely across the Council. The existing, Service-orientated procurement mechanisms struggled to meet the demand and there was clear evidence that various sectors within the Council were over-ordering. As a consequence, it was agreed that a centralised, corporate procurement process was required. This was developed jointly by Corporate Procurement, Corporate Health and Safety, Environmental Health and Neighbourhoods and Sustainability procurement staff.
- 10.2 It was determined that all Covid PPE procurement requests should be channelled through a single process. Environmental Health assesses all requests and applies an assessment tool which enables a consistent, transparent triage process to be undertaken. Requests are categorised as 'Approved', 'Approved subject to current stocks' and 'Rejected'.

Covid Compliance Assessment at Depots etc

- 10.3 Environmental Health have collaborated with Health and Safety colleagues in order to assess the adequacy of Covid-suppression measures at Neighbourhoods and Sustainability operational depots and other sites across the city. On-site compliance visits were conducted at 9 depots and 3 other key locations in May. It was observed that significant work had been carried out in order to mitigate the risk of transmission of Covid and that adherence to the new systems was good. A report of findings – including recommendations – was, subsequently submitted to N&S management.
- 10.4 Given the time elapsed since the last round of Environmental Health inspections and the increase in activity at many locations, it has been agreed that further Environmental Health interventions at operational workplaces are required. It is proposed that a series of compliance assessments will be made jointly with Health and Safety and trade union colleagues as well as local managers.

Guidance on Handling Covid cases in Council Workplaces

- 10.5 Concerns were raised in October about the increasing number of employee absences being recorded at locations within Neighbourhoods and Sustainability. These levels were risking the continuity of key NS Services. Work is ongoing within Neighbourhoods and Sustainability involving Environmental Health, Human Resources, senior management and unions in order to refine existing processes. One concern relates to the actions to be taken by managers when employees display Covid symptoms or report a positive test result. It is felt that the unavoidable time-lag between confirmation of a positive result and subsequent contact from Test and Protect with close workplace contacts presents a serious risk. A managers' briefing is, consequently, being developed which aims to reduce the potential for spread of infection in such scenarios. It is proposed that the briefing will be applicable corporately across the Council.

General Advice

- 10.6 Environmental Health has sought to assist a range of Council colleagues on Covid-related matters since March. These matters have mainly centred upon infection-control, disinfection and social distancing measures at various settings.

11. LIAISON

- 11.1 The advent of the pandemic has reduced normal liaison activity between Environmental Health and Trading Standards and their counterparts at other Local Authorities. Similarly, normal joint-working arrangements with Scottish and UK Governments and agencies have been disrupted. However, many have been replaced by Covid-specific arrangements which require inter-authority and inter-agency collaboration.

Enforcement Expert Working Group

- 11.2 The Scottish Enforcement Expert Working Group comprises representatives from Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Police Scotland, the Health and Safety Executive and the Scottish Government. This Group has been influential in the formulation of a considerable proportion of national guidance and has advised the Scottish Government on proposed, Covid-related legislation. Two officers from Environmental Health in Glasgow are members of the said Working Group.

Drafting Guidance

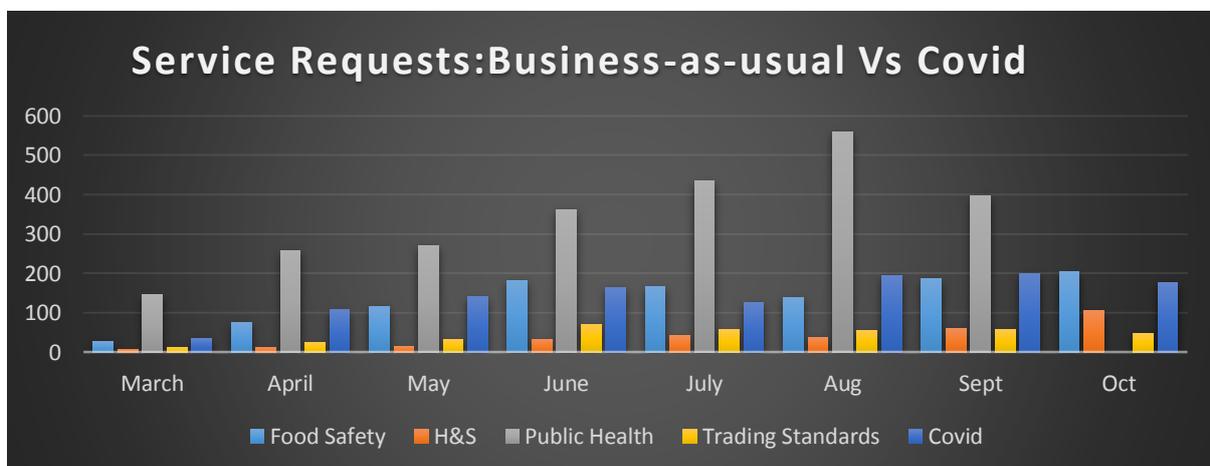
- 11.3 As referred to above, Glasgow Environmental Health and Trading Standards have made a considerable contribution to the production of national sector guidance. This has been particularly relevant in relation to guidance on hospitality, events, retail and close contact services.

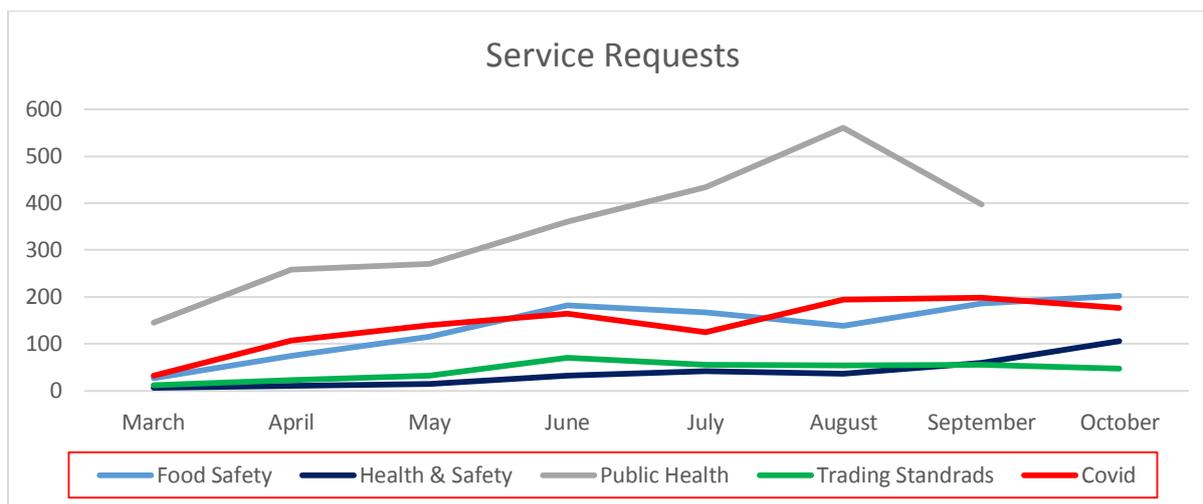
Weekly LA/NHS/LRP Meetings

- 11.4 Environmental Health participate in twice weekly meetings with the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Public Health Protection Unit, other Local Authorities, the Local Resilience Partnership (LRP), Police Scotland and the Ministry of Defence. These meetings facilitate joint working and liaison on matters relating to Test and Protect, outbreak management and the enforcement of Covid legislation.

12. BUSINESS AS USUAL

- 12.1 As stated previously, while a very large proportion of Environmental Health and Trading Standards resource was devoted to proactive and reactive Covid-related work, The service was still engaged in handling service requests from the public and Elected Members. It was necessary to make decisions upon the prioritisation of all work. While the need for Covid suppression was obvious, the public continued to place demands upon the service:





Public Health

- 12.2 As a result of the pandemic, our Environmental Health Teams have been delivering a range of services to the residents of Glasgow to protect public health.
- 12.3 Much of the public health's team's work is based upon responding to service requests made by the public. The number of service requests received by the team during the pandemic reduced in some subjects, yet increased in others. For example, there was an increase in complaints about intruder alarms at businesses that were closed during the lockdown phase of the pandemic. There was an increase in complaints about burning of garden waste complaints during this time too, as well as notifications of out-of-control dogs.
- 12.4 The team has continued to investigate a wide variety of service requests including emergency drainage defects and domestic water penetration. New systems of working were devised and introduced including asking customers to provide video footage or photos of issues which allowed officers to assess the situation and act accordingly.
- 12.5 Environmental Health teams are monitoring fly-tipping hotspots while Public Space CCTV teams at Eastgate are assisting in a bid to try and catch the individuals involved.

Pest Control

- 12.6 The Pest Control Team, which works in partnership with Environmental Health, also had to adapt its working practices. For example, there has been a significant increase in the volume of service requests for rat treatments.
- 12.7 While home visits were suspended at the time of lockdown, the team developed a Home Treatment kit for householders. A member of the team provided direct

support on using the kit to the householder and follow up support if disposal was required.

Food Safety

- 12.8 Shortly after the commencement of lockdown in March, The Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing granted a 12-week deviation from the Food Law Code of Practice. The purpose of the request was twofold; one, to reduce the risk of spread of infection and two, to enable Environmental Health staff to focus on the suppression of Covid-19 in partnership with other public health services. This, effectively meant that Local Authorities were not required to undertake programmed food safety interventions during this time. This deviation was extended in July until 31st October and has been further until 28 February 2021.

While this means that Environmental Health will continue to refrain from proactively inspecting food businesses, the service will continue to act upon complaints, allegations and intelligence of food safety risks in Glasgow.

Other Environmental Health Functions and Trading Standards

- 12.9 The subjects covered by the range of Environmental Health duties are affected to varying degrees. On-site Health and Safety enforcement work has reduced significantly – while the demand for advice on workplace safety has remained steady. Investigations of accidents reported via the RIDDOR system have continued but only in the most serious instances. The flow of Civic Government and Liquor Licensing applications being processed by the Council has reduced, allowing Environmental Health and Licensing Standards resources to be diverted to Covid enforcement activity.

13. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: All Covid-related activities are being funded from existing budgets. However, The Scottish Government has committed to provide hypothecated funding to all Scottish Local Authorities for the recruitment of Covid Enforcement Officers. The exact figure available to Glasgow has yet to be confirmed.

Legal: A range of statutory instruments have been made under the terms of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020. Key statutes at present are the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Directions by Local Authorities) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 and the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions

and Requirements) (Additional Temporary Measures) (Scotland) Regulations 2020.

Personnel:

The demands placed upon Environmental Health and Trading standards' staff by the pandemic are very considerable. Requirements to maintain certain levels of business-as-usual have persisted while staff have been diverted to a range of activities relating to the suppression of spread of infection. This has led to an increase in working hours for many, covering urgent demands during evenings and weekends. While part of the demand has been met using staff members working various non-standard patterns, a considerable amount of overtime working has been necessary.

Procurement:

There are no relevant procurement issues.

Council Strategic Plan: Theme:

- **A Healthier City**

Outcomes:

- Glasgow is healthier
- Our services are focused on early intervention and prevention
- We have integrated services with health that support Glaswegians when they need it

Priorities:

- (38) Support Service redesign that will result in Glasgow becoming a healthier, empowered city, with early intervention and prevention approaches at the heart of what we do

Theme:

- **A Well-Governed City that listens and responds**

Outcomes:

- The Council has open and transparent decision-making

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-22

N/A

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?

No significant impact

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.

N/A

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental:

The crucial role of Environmental Health in the protection of public health has been emphasised during the 2020 pandemic and consideration should be given to the sustainability of this service in the future

Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive:

N/A

Economic:

N/A

Privacy and Data Protection impacts:

No Data Protection Impacts

14. Recommendations

That the Committee notes the content of the report and that resources are being reviewed and strengthened as part of the ongoing COVID response. This includes the requirement for business as usual to commence in full in the future and in accordance with national guidance. This will be carried out in conjunction with the Council family review and as part of service recovery planning.