

REPORT

Delegated Powers – Covid-19

Edinburgh Integration Joint Board

14 April 2020

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| Executive Summary | Approval is sought to suspend all Board and Committee meetings until 30 June 2020 and to delegate authority to the Chief Officer to take all urgent decisions until the end of the Covid-19 emergency |
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| Recommendations | <p>It is recommended that the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes that the Board meeting to consider the budget would take place on 28 April 2020. 2. Agrees that all other Board and committee meetings should be suspended until 30 June 2020 but 3. To delegate authority to the Chief Officer to take any urgent decision on behalf of the Board, in consultation with the Chair and the Vice-Chair, until the end of the Covid-19 emergency or until the resumption of the Board meetings. |
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Directions

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| Direction to City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian or both organisations | No direction required | ✓ |
| | Issue a direction to City of Edinburgh Council | |
| | Issue a direction to NHS Lothian | |
| | Issue a direction to City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian | |

Report Circulation

1. This report has not been to any committees prior to consideration by the EIJB.

Main Report

2. In light of the Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent governmental advice a number of public authorities have suspended their formal meetings. The City of Edinburgh Council took this decision on Tuesday 17 March. The further restrictions on movement and implementation of a partial lockdown allowing only essential travel has meant that formal meetings are unable to take place by traditional means and remote participation is the only way meetings can take place.
3. The EIJB allows remote participation for its Board meetings. As a result, the EIJB is able to hold meetings during the period and the benefits of continuing a robust governance structure should be considered alongside the practicality of holding remote meetings with a large number of members and in particular the impact of supporting a meeting on staff resources in a time of emergency. There is currently significant additional pressure on staff resource providing essential front-line services and the pressure the virus has put on staffing levels. Subsequently, there is a need to prioritise front-line service and there is not currently the resource available to be able to effectively support the Board and its committees.
4. The EIJB has a robust structure of committees performing a scrutiny function. However, the EIJB is a strategic body and there is officer governance in place to ensure that the service is performing its duties. If committees do not take place, then this will result in a reduction of scrutiny but the need to prioritise front line service delivery is paramount and the Chief Officer believes that officer governance can be relied on for the period of the emergency.
5. As a result of the Covid-19 emergency which poses a significant risk to the continuity of service delivery of the Partnership and in order to ensure that the service is able to respond to emerging issues in a way which ensures the safety of the community, it is recommended that the Board suspends all meetings of the Board and its committees until 30 June 2020. If agreed, the Chief Officer will, in consultation with the chair and vice-chair, determine if meetings can be resumed or the period of suspension should continue.
6. Scottish Government advice has been that the EIJB is still required to take forward a budget for the new financial year. Subsequently the intention is that the EIJB meeting on 28 April 2020 to consider the budget should take place and that this would take place remotely.
7. The EIJB does not include a list of delegated powers for its officers as operationally they are given powers through the Council or the health board. There are urgency provisions in place contained within Standing Orders that allow the Chief Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to take a decision out with the Board as long as it is urgent and can not wait for the next Board meeting and that it is reported

to that meeting. However, given that the length of the Covid-19 restrictions has been recently estimated by both the UK and Scottish Governments to be potentially into the autumn it is recommended that additional powers are provided to the Chief Officer. It is proposed that the Chief Officer be provided delegated powers to take any decision necessary on behalf of the EIJB, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair until the end of the Covid-19 emergency and the resumption of Board meetings.

Implications for Edinburgh Integration Joint Board

Financial

8. There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Legal / risk implications

9. The EIJB is permitted by legislation to hold remote meetings.
10. If meetings are cancelled, scrutiny and governance would be conducted by the officer structures in place. Operational governance is in place for all services, but they usually complement committee structures and consequently the overall governance would be less robust, but this must be balanced against reducing the impact on staff resource at a time of national emergency.

Equality and integrated impact assessment

11. If meetings are held remotely then there are limitations in terms of access for both members of the Board and the public.

Environment and sustainability impacts

12. There are no environmental and sustainability impacts as a result of this report.

Quality of care

13. There are no quality of care issues as a result of this report.

Consultation

14. Not Applicable.

Report Author

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Background Reports

1. [EIJB Standing Orders](#)

Appendices

None