

## REPORT TO ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL – 18 NOVEMBER, 2021

### COVID-19 UPDATE

#### 1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 This report is to provide the Council with an update on the Council's response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and work being done on the recovery.

#### 2 Recommendations

The Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 **Note the ongoing response of the Council as a Category 1 Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act and work being done on the Recovery phase.**

#### 3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 This report is coming before the Council as a reflection of the significance of the ongoing response to the pandemic. It is an opportunity for elected members to discuss Aberdeenshire wide ramifications. It is a report for noting and any other necessary decision making in respect of the Council's current activity will follow the Council's agreed delegations in terms of the Scheme of Governance.
- 3.2 Since 30 April 2020, Council have been provided with an update on the COVID-19 pandemic at each of its meetings.
- 3.3 A timeline of key events and milestones in the UK and the Scottish Government response to the emergency since the last COVID-19 update to Council on 23 September 2021 is attached at **Appendix 1**.

#### 4 Discussion

- 4.1 A verbal report with the most up to date information will be provided at the meeting. Members will wish to note the highlights and focal points of the council efforts in the following key areas:
- 4.2 **IMPACT ON COMMUNITY** - The community is asked for their understanding of the challenges being faced whilst an incredible effort is made by health and social care staff to care for those who urgently need it. NHS Grampian have warned that it is being stretched further than ever before with Covid-19 continuing to apply an "incredible level of pressure" on the health board. It is now facing a daily challenge of having enough beds to treat cancer patients, trauma patients, coronavirus patients and other unplanned emergencies. This includes community hospitals and care settings whether that be at home or on

a ward. This will continue to have an impact on those waiting for elective procedures.

The community is being urged to use the right service including dialling **NHS 111**. It is also vital for people to take up the offer of a Covid vaccination. NHS Grampian have also sought the support of employers in the area to ensure they allow their staff to be flexible and enable relatives who have been hospitalised to collect their family members as soon in the day as it is possible to be discharged and not to wait until the evening at the end of usual business hours. The swift throughput of patients and the freeing-up of beds is crucial. NHS Grampian have also asked that employers allow homeworking where possible as this does make a difference whilst the vaccination programmes are ongoing.

- 4.2 **VIRUS SUPPRESSION** – working together with NHS and Public Health colleagues, intensive efforts have been focused on suppression of the virus in Aberdeenshire combining practical interventions, communications, and messaging in order to address the rates of infection in our area. The cross-sector officer Surge Coordination Group continues to meet fortnightly. Rates of infection rose significantly across Scotland after August when restrictions were lifted and schools returned. Whilst at first lower in Aberdeenshire compared with Scotland wide data, rates locally are not seeing the downward trend of the rest of the country. This may be due to previously low rates of infection in Aberdeenshire thus making more people susceptible to infection at this time.

At time of writing, in Aberdeenshire, the rate per 100,000 sits at 367.4 as compared with the Scotland wide rate per 100,000 of 343.3. Hospitalisations in Grampian have increased although still represent a relatively small percentage of those infected despite the high transmission rates. The focus is on promoting the fundamental consistent messages of baseline measures and their importance still wherever possible– handwashing, sanitizing, facemasks, distancing, homeworking.

- 4.3 **VACCINATION PROGRAMME** – Work to deliver the vaccination programme continues. Aberdeenshire has one of the highest areas of uptake across Scotland with over 95% take-up of the first dose and 90% of residents over the age of 16 with two doses. Over 70% of 12-15 year olds have also had the vaccine. The booster programme is well underway, combining delivery of the Covid booster with the rollout of the flu vaccination. Work continues to vacate the Live Life Aberdeenshire sports and leisure facilities, and this is likely to be concluded in early 2022.
- 4.4 **COMMUNITY TESTING** - The Council continues to lead the asymptomatic testing programme across Aberdeenshire with supported rapid lateral flow testing and the collection of free home testing kits, available in many towns and villages on a regular basis, continuing through to March 2022. A revised

plan is in place for winter months with a focus on offering a home test collect service in as many locations as possible and currently over 20 locations are visited on a weekly basis. Observed testing continues to be offered in larger towns. Information on where the testing team will be on a daily basis is available on the council's website ([Community testing - Aberdeenshire Council](#)) and 'myaberdeenshire' app. Community groups are also being offered the ability to become collect sites with the Community Testing Team offering regular deliveries to allow community groups to distribute home test kits within their community. Any community group wishing to get involved can register using this online [form](#). Symptomatic testing also continues to be available at 8 locations across Aberdeenshire, delivered by the Scottish Government and supported by the Scottish Ambulance Service.

- 4.5 IMPACT ON STAFF - Absence rates remain relatively stable. However anecdotal evidence would indicate an increasing gap in workforce capacity caused by self-isolation and higher rates of transmission in the community as some services are feeling the effect in the workforce of the high covid figures.

Workforce wellbeing is however acknowledged to be more complex than simply monitoring absence rates. Wellbeing resources and support are regularly promoted to the workforce through multiple communication channels. Services are working well with the corporate wellbeing team to ensure resources reach all staff, including those not corporately networked. This is an ongoing task. There has been an increase in uptake of corporate wellbeing training and learning opportunities.

The pandemic mobilization remains ready to deploy to critical areas of service delivery should the need arise. HR continue to work with services to review the winter resilience of the workforce and how to mitigate the impact of covid isolation periods in particular sectors such as Education, Care and Infrastructure. Currently services are reviewing the health of their relief pools and ability to create additional capacity in their workforces, e.g. agencies and overtime.

- 4.6 EDUCATION – Schools returned recently from the October break. Following a decision by the Scottish Government not to relax restrictions at this time, the same Covid mitigations which were in place prior to the holiday period will remain in place for the meantime. The most significant aspect of this is the continued requirement for the wearing of face masks in schools.

Staff and secondary school pupils are still encouraged to undertake regular LFD testing and Aberdeenshire pupils and staff have taken this very seriously with testing rates in Aberdeenshire regularly among some of the highest in the country. High rates of transmission in the community continues to result in significant absence in some school settings and consequently disruption to learning and teaching. However, the whole school community continues to address this as a feature of the current prevailing circumstances. It is hoped that rising vaccination rates in children will begin to address this.

- 4.7 USE OF OFFICES – Officers continue to progress the Virtual Working Environment project. This project seeks to embed the concept of a Virtual Working Environment for our whole workforce and the changes that this will mean for the office estate amongst other things. Staff welfare and wellbeing is a key element of the project as the transition to new ways of working continues.

The Virtual Working Environment is defined as the places our employees work from using digital means of participation whether that be from their own home, or within council provided spaces or other places they chose to work from that aren't provided and maintained by the Council.

Aside from our office estate, this can be our schools, leisure facilities, care homes, family centres, and depots. We are making clear that, accepting the requirement to deliver some services and activities from particular locations, our approach to a virtual working environment is not exclusive to those who were previously office-based but it can apply to all of our workforce, and we will continue to explore the relevance of this for those outwith a traditional office workplace. Meantime, we continue to address the use of existing office space to offer that part of our workforce who have been homeworking some certainty as to the planning for the future. New ways of working will involve different design and use of office space as well as technical and equipment suitable to support it; the behavioural and cultural change that sits alongside; and the policies, procedures and protocols that underpin the transition. Our use of offices is likely to revolve more around the collaborative opportunities that feature within our ways of working.

Although social distancing restrictions have been lifted, council offices continue to operate on the basis of two metre distancing for the meantime. This was comfortably achievable in terms of capacity and has allowed us to mirror the NHS requirements bearing in mind HSCP staff span both organisations. It also enables strong role-modelling of a gradual approach that is cogniscent of the still concerning rate of transmission of the virus, the potential for the need for future outbreak control, and fulfilling our health & safety obligations as an employer to mitigate against the spread of the virus in our workplaces.

Whilst it remains our position that 2m distancing is required in the main footplate of our office workstation provision, there has been a reassessment of distancing within our meeting rooms and spaces. So as to meet demand for a gradual increase for spaces where collaborative opportunities can take place for those who are not working within council offices at present, it has been possible to reduce distancing in those settings to 1m. This brings more space into operation although meeting organisers are still encouraged to be choiceful about the decision to bring about a face to face meeting at this time. Guidance still discourages this unless absolutely necessary although in reducing the requirement to distance to 1m it is acknowledged that those who are more vulnerable or concerned by the risk of in-person meetings can always choose a remote attendance option. The high rate of vaccination rates makes it possible for those who do consider it appropriate to gain the benefit

of collaborative opportunities such as meetings or training etc in person within council meeting spaces.

The next phase of transition will be to an experimental stage, and we will make that change when it is possible to reduce to nil physical distancing. Our experimental stage will allow us to try out new and different options for collaboration workspace that will inform later phases when more permanent design features can be incorporated based on experience.

The impact for local democracy and the formal meetings of the council involving elected members was dealt with separately in a report to the September meeting of Full Council where it was agreed to pilot 11 meetings to test hybrid meetings as part of a proposed future choice-based blended model of Fully Virtual & Hybrid meetings. The results of the pilot are to be reported to the January meeting of Full Council.

- 4.8 RECOVERY – During the period when we have been “Living with COVID-19” the focus of activity centered primarily around Incident Recovery (bringing back services; supporting businesses; encouraging community resilience; controlling finances) and coming out of various phases of lockdown/periods of restriction. Despite the opening up of services and activity, there remains a significant effort ahead to continue to suppress the virus and deal with it as a feature of our ongoing way of life likely for some time to come, even with mass vaccination. The balance between response and recovery continues to favour the latter. The Recovery Strategy agreed by Full Council in July of last year has supported us to move toward a Recovery Programme which will be the subject of a report to Full Council in due course.

## 5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 All six of the Council’s priorities are engaged in this report as the response to the pandemic reaches all parts of society and all parts of the Council’s activities.
- 5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial			x
Staffing			x
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland			x
Children and Young People’s Rights and Wellbeing			x
Climate Change and Sustainability			x
Health and Wellbeing			x
Town Centre First			x

- 5.3 An integrated impact assessment is not required because Full Council is being asked to consider and note the update on the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This report will not therefore have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics. Any future reports requiring substantive decisions arising from the COVID-19 pandemic will be subject to equality impact assessments where required.
- 5.4 There are no staffing or financial implications directly arising from the recommendations in this report. The staffing impacts of the pandemic are reflected in the body of the report and the financial impact of actions taken to date in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be reported to Full Council in due course as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. In addition to this, significant financial resources were distributed from the Scottish Government to the Council in order to support local businesses, the self-employed and residents. The Council's response requires resources and appropriate governance in order to manage these public funds appropriately whilst issuing them promptly. In order to ensure that the Council's overall financial position is supported through this pandemic, dialogue continues with the Scottish Government to secure not only resources but also the assurance that additional expenditure will be covered. All expenditure and lost income related to the COVID-19 pandemic is being captured and collated to establish the direct financial implications. This information will be shared with Council and will also be included in a regular return to the Scottish Government.
- 5.5 There is no direct impact on sustainability arising from the recommendations in this report. However, there has been a positive impact on sustainability through the increase in Council officers working from home and the move to remote Committee meetings, the outcome of which has been a subsequent reduction in business travel across the local authority area. Reduced access to Council buildings has also resulted in increased use of electronic documents where it has not been possible to obtain a paper copy.
- 5.6 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Corporate Level](#):
- **ACORP001 – Budget Pressures**
  - **ACORP002– Changes in government policy, legislation, and regulation**
  - **ACORP003 – Workforce**
  - **ACORP004 – Business and Organisational Transformation**
  - **ACORP005 – Working with other Organisations**
  - **ACORP006 – Reputation Management**
  - **ACORP007 – Social Risk**
  - **ACORP009 – Operational Risk Management (including Health and Safety)**
  - **ACORP010 – Environmental Challenges**

## 6 Scheme of Governance

- 6.1 The Head of Finance and The Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 6.2 [Full Council is able to consider this item in terms of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A](#) of the Scheme of Governance as the response to the pandemic applies to all of the Council's activities and the matter under consideration is not therefore delegated to any of the Council's appointed Committees. Where substantive decisions are required as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic these will be reported to the relevant Committee, or to Full Council where appropriate.
- 6.3 In terms of Section C.2.4 of the List of Officer Powers in Part 2B of the Scheme of Governance the Chief Executive has the delegated power to implement the provisions of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and the Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005.

**Jim Savege**  
**Chief Executive**  
**9<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

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### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Timeline and Key Milestones of the COVID-19 Pandemic

## **APPENDIX 1 – Timeline and Key Milestones of the COVID-19 Pandemic**

**2020**

**Quarter 1**    **01/01/20 to 31/03/20**                      **No update.**

**Quarter 2**    **01/04/20 to 30/06/20**

**7 May** – Scottish Government extend the lockdown in Scotland for another 3 weeks.

**18 May** – First Minister of Scotland sets out plans to begin easing Scotland’s lockdown restrictions from 28 May.

**21 May** – First Minister of Scotland outlines a four-phase “route map” for easing lockdown restrictions in Scotland that will include allowing people to meet up outside with people from one other household in the first phase. The lockdown will be eased from 28 May subject to the number of new cases of COVID-19 continuing to fall. Schools in Scotland will reopen on 11 August when students would receive a “blended model” of part-time study at school combined with some learning at home.

**26 May** – The Scottish Government announces plans for Test and Protect, a track and trace system.

**28 May** – Contact tracing systems go live in Scotland – Test and Protect.

**29 May** – Lockdown measures are eased in Scotland.

**18 June** – Scottish Government announces the next phase of easing the lockdown restrictions in Scotland. People living alone or single parents with children can form an “extended group” with one other household from 19 Jun, enabling them to stay overnight, while up to three households can meet up outdoors. Face coverings will become compulsory on public transport from 22 June and most shops were being allowed to reopen from 29 June.

**22 June** – The wearing of face coverings becomes compulsory on public transport in Scotland with exemptions made for children under five and people with certain medical conditions.

**23 June** – Scottish Education Minister confirms that schools in Scotland will return full time in August providing the coronavirus continues to be suppressed.

**24 June** – Scottish Government announces changes to the lockdown restrictions in Scotland including allowing people to meet indoors with two other households from 10

July, and reopening pubs and restaurants, holiday accommodation and hairdressers from 15 July. The two metre social distancing rule stays in place for Scotland.

**29 June** – Non essential retailers reopen in Scotland.

### **Quarter 3 01/07/20 to 30/09/20**

**2 July** – Scottish Government announce that the wearing of face coverings will become mandatory in shops in Scotland from 10 July.

**3 July** – Scotland lifts its five-mile travel restriction.

**6 July** – Beer gardens and pavement cafes are allowed to reopen in Scotland

**9 July** – Scottish Government announce that people in Scotland will be able to meet up indoors with two other households from 10 July and also in extended groups outside of up to fifteen from the same day (moved into Phase 3 of the Route Map). Indoor areas of cars & restaurants were to open from 15 July.

**15 July** – Hairdressers and barbers, pubs and restaurants, cinemas, tourist attractions, places of worship and childcare facilities reopen in Scotland.

**16 July** – Scottish Government announce changes to lockdown rules from those who are shielding from 17 July. From 17 July they could visit holiday accommodation, as well as outdoor markets and gardens.

**30 July** – Scottish Government gives schools the go ahead to reopen on 11 August with all pupils expected to be in class full time from 18 August. A provisional date for gyms, swimming pools and indoor sports venues to reopen on 14 September. Also confirmed the shielding programme will be paused on 1 August.

**1 August** – Shielding programme is paused for Scotland but would continue for the areas where extra precautions have been introduced.

**5 August** – Lockdown restrictions are reimposed on Aberdeen after a cluster of COVID-19 cases.

**10 August** – Staff returned to Aberdeenshire schools for in-service training.

**12 August** – Pupils in Aberdeenshire return to school for the first time since March. Scottish Government announces that lockdown measures will remain in place in Aberdeen.

**19 August** – Lockdown measures in Aberdeen are extended for a further week.

**20 August** – Scottish Government announces that gyms, swimming pools and indoor sports courts can reopen from 31 August.

**23 August** – Lockdown restrictions in Aberdeen are partially lifted with restrictions on travel and a ban on indoor gatherings lifted from 24 August and bars and restaurants allowed to reopen from 26 August.

**25 August** – Scottish Government announces that school pupils will be required to wear face coverings in school corridors, communal areas and on school buses from Monday 31 August.

**28 August** - A new law comes into force giving police the power to break up house parties involving more than 15 people.

**31 August** – face coverings become mandatory for Scottish secondary schools. Gyms, swimming pools and indoor sports courts are permitted to reopen.

**1 September** – Scottish Government announce that following an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in Glasgow, East Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire, additional restrictions will be introduced for people living in these areas for an initial 2-week period.

**3 September** – Scottish Government announce the resumption of health and wellbeing visits to care homes from 7 September.

**10 September** – Indoor visits to hospitals and care homes will be limited to essential visits. The NHS Protect Scotland app is launched. The Scottish Government publish an updated route map, limiting indoor and outdoor gatherings to six people from two households, as Scotland remains in Phase 3.

**16 September** – Data published by the Chief Statistician shows the Scottish Economy contracted by 19.4% during the second quarter of 2020, covering the period April to June. The Scottish Government published a research report exploring the costs of extending the UK Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme on a temporary basis.

**20 September** – Scottish Government announce £4.25 million extra funding for charities and projects tackling violence against women and girls.

**22 September** – Scottish Government announce new restrictions on household visits and a national curfew for pubs, bars and restaurant (10pm curfew) that go into effect on Friday 25 September.

**24 September** – Scottish Government published the Autumn Budget Revision for 2020-21 outlining further funding allocations.

**25 September** – UK Government publish the Winter Economy Plan, outlining additional support to businesses and workers across the UK.

**29 September** – Scottish Government publish the State of the Economy Report, summarising recent developments in the global, UK and Scottish economies and providing an analysis of the performance of, and outlook for, the Scottish economy.

**30 September** – The Scottish Government announce a new grant to support people on low incomes if they are asked to self-isolate.

#### **Quarter 4 01/10/20 to 31/12/20**

**2 October** – Scottish Government announce a nationwide survey for education staff in schools or early learning centres to help identify the proportion of people working in an education setting who have had COVID-19. The Scottish Government publish the Coronavirus (COVID-19) mental health needs of hospitalised patients report.

**7 October** – The Scottish Government announce new temporary measures, including restricting hospitality opening times to 6am – 6pm indoors, with no sales of alcohol. The new restrictions will be backed by a £40 million support fund for business and the existing UK Job Retention Scheme and will be in place nationwide for 16 days. The Scottish Government announce plans for Higher and Advance Higher exams to go ahead in 2021, while National 5 exams will be replaced by a system where grades are awarded based on coursework and teacher judgement.

**8 October** – Scottish Government and COSLA agree additional spending powers and funding for councils to address the financial pressures caused by the coronavirus pandemic over the next 2 years. The Scottish Government publish the Mental Health – Transition and Recovery Plan, outlining the Government's response to the mental health impacts of COVID-19.

**15 October** – First Minister announces that the wearing of face coverings is to become mandatory in workplace canteens from 16 October, and in communal workplace areas, such as corridors and social spaces from 19 October.

**20 October** – Scottish Government announce further funding for councils to provide free school meals through the winter breaks and additional flexibility to use £20 million, previously held in reserve for the Scottish Welfare Fund, to support people in their communities.

**21 October** – Scottish Government announce the extension of temporary restrictions until 2 November and additional funding for businesses.

**22 October** – Scottish Government announce a £2 million support package for residential outdoor education centres. The UK Government announce increased financial support through the job support and self-employed schemes.

**23 October** – Scottish Government publish the Five Level Strategic Framework, which indicates different levels of protection that might be needed based on different levels of transmission for the virus. The levels to come into force on 2 November. The Scottish Tourism Recovery Taskforce publish its recommendations for supporting the tourism sector's recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

**28 October** – Scottish Government announce an NHS Winter Preparedness Plan to support health and care services over the Winter. An Adult Social Care Winter Plan will also be published in early November. Public Health Scotland publish its report on discharged from NHS hospitals to care homes in Scotland.

**29 October** – Scottish Government announce the new local authority protection measures in force from 2 November (Aberdeenshire falling within Level 2). Face Covering Exemption Cards are launched for people who are unable to wear coverings due to health conditions, disabilities or other special circumstances.

**2 November** – Pupils in the senior phase of Scottish education (S4-S6) must wear face masks in classrooms in addition to communal areas if the school is in Level 3 of 4.

**9 November** – First review of the local authority protection measures by the Scottish Government.

**16 November** – Scottish General Election (Coronavirus) Bill introduced to Scottish Parliament which would allow arrangements to be put in place for the Scottish general election in response to Covid-19. The bill will (amongst other things) change the deadline for postal vote applications to give more time to process an expected high level of requests to vote by post; give the Scottish Ministers power to hold an all-postal election and to hold polling over multiple days, if appropriate; and give a reserve power to the Presiding Officer to postpone the 2021 election by up to 6 months in certain circumstances.

**19 November** – Statement given by the Health Secretary to Scottish Parliament regarding COVID Vaccine delivery. The priorities for the first wave of vaccine distribution, from December 2020 to February 2021, are front-line health and social care staff; older residents in care homes; care home staff; all those aged 80 and over;

unpaid carers and personal assistants; and those delivering the vaccination programme.

**20 November** – 11 local authority areas move to level 4 and cross-border non-essential travel between Scotland and England is made illegal.

**24 November** – The 4 United Kingdom nations announce a coordinated plan for Christmas. Three households would be allowed to meet indoors, at a place of worship and outdoor for a space of 5 days (23-27 December) and travel restrictions would be eased.

**19 December** – Following an outbreak of a new strain of COVID-19 in Wales and South East England, along with seventeen cases of the new strain in Scotland, the coordinated plan for Christmas is cancelled across the United Kingdom. A sole exception is provided for Christmas Day, scrapping the previously planned 5 day relief from travel restrictions. Three weeks of level four restrictions were planned and return to schools postponed to 11 January 2021.

**26 December** – All of mainland Scotland has Level 4 restrictions applied, including the closure of non-essential retail and hospitality.

## **2021**

### **Quarter 1 01/01/21 to 31/03/21**

**4 January 2021** – Statement given by the First Minister to the Scottish Parliament to confirm that the Cabinet decided to introduce from midnight a legal requirement to stay at home except for essential purposes for the duration of January. Scottish Government announce the roll-out of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

**5 January** – All of mainland Scotland moves from Level 4 to temporary Lockdown, with new guidance published.

**7 January** – Scottish Government announce a temporary ban on eviction orders will be extended until the end of March. Travel restrictions are updated so that from 0400 on 9 January people arriving in Scotland from Botswana, Israel, Jerusalem, Mauritius or Seychelles need to self-isolate. The current restrictions in relation to South Africa remain in place. The UK Government announces that NHS patients across the UK will receive life-saving COVID-19 treatments that could cut hospital time by 10 days, as REMAP-CAP clinical trial shows that when tocilizumab and sarilumab are administered to patients within the first 24 hours of being admitted to intensive care their relative risk of death is reduced by 24%.

**8 January** – Scottish Government announce passengers travelling to Scotland from abroad will be required to have proof of a negative test taken a maximum of 72 hours before travel. It is also announced that university students will be taught online throughout January and February, with the vast majority not expected to be back on campuses until the start of March.

**10 January** – Scottish Government announce the rollout of the Oxford / AstraZeneca Coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine in GP practices and community vaccination centres from 11 January.

**11 January** – Scottish Courts & Tribunal's Service announce changes to the criminal court practice to reduce the transmission of coronavirus, reducing the number of criminal trials taking place during lockdown by up to 75%.

**12 January** – Scottish Government announce that from 0400 on 15 January 2021, 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.

**13 January** – Scottish Government announce the strengthening of lockdown restrictions from 0001 on 16 January. Non-essential click and collect retail services will be prohibited in Level 4 areas, with changes in five other key areas including restrictions on the consumption of alcohol in public places.

**14 January** – Following the identification of a new variant of coronavirus in Brazil, the Scottish Government announce additional restrictions imposed on all arrivals from South America, Portugal, Panama, Cape Verde and the Falkland Islands. Travelers who have been in any of these countries or territories within 10 days prior to their arrival in Scotland must isolate, along with all members of their household. No exemptions from isolation apply.

**15 January** – Scottish Government announce the suspension of all travel corridors.

**16 January** – Scottish Government announce funding of £986,702 to help vulnerable young people into work.

**18 January** – Scottish Government announce additional funding for taxi and private hire car drivers as well as £750,000 investment in local carer centres, to support unpaid carers.

**19 January** – Five independent hospitals will support NHS Scotland with elective care this includes the Albyn Hospital in Aberdeen for NHS Grampian. Taxi grant criteria updated to include taxi drivers in receipt of state benefits. It is announced that lockdown measures will stay in place across mainland Scotland and some island

communities until at least the middle of February. Barra and Vatersay move into lockdown from 0001 on 20 January following a sharp increase in cases.

**21 January** – The vaccination information campaign ‘Roll Your Sleeves Up’ is launched. It is announced that £1 million in funding is to be made available to childminders who have been financially impacted by the pandemic.

**24 January** – Scottish Government announce that invitations to vaccine appointments for people aged 70 – 79 are to commence from 25 January.

**28 January** – UK Government announce commercial manufacturing of the Valneva COVID-19 vaccine candidate has begun in Livingston, West Lothian. The Scottish Government announce additional restrictions on travelers arriving in Scotland from the UAE, Rwanda and Burundi, the limited exemptions to isolation will not apply for these countries, everyone in the household of arriving passengers must also isolate. Aircraft from the UAE into Scotland is banned from 1300 on 29 January.

**29 January** – Scottish Government announce mass vaccinations centres will open in Edinburgh and Aberdeen on 1 February. The Event Complex Aberdeen (‘TECA’) is to be used for this purpose in Aberdeen. The Western Isles are moved to Level 4 due to a rise in cases.

**2 February** – Scottish Government announce supervised quarantine and expansion of testing. Current restrictions, including the ‘stay at home’ requirement, are set to remain in place until the end of February and schools will continue to be closed to most children for the rest of the month. Children in early learning, child-care and in primaries 1-3 are scheduled to make a full return to nurseries and schools from 22 February. The criteria for the Self-Isolation Support Grant are extended.

**3 February** – Scottish Government announce £7.75 million funding package for the seafood sector.

**5 February** – UK Government announce mandatory hotel quarantine will be introduced from 15 February for anyone travelling to the UK from a country on the UK’s travel ban list.

**9 February** – Scottish Government announce all arrivals to Scotland from outside the Common Travel Area must book and pay for managed isolation in quarantine hotels from 15 February 2021. All arrivals must quarantine for at least ten days and will be tested twice for the virus – once on day two and once on day eight after arrival.

**10 February** – Scottish Government announce the number of first dose vaccinations in Scotland reaches the 1 million milestone.

**11 February** – UK Government announce a further 353 Armed Forces personnel to be deployed to locations across Scotland to support the testing and vaccine delivery programmes.

**16 February** – Scottish Government announce children in early learning and childcare (ELC) and primaries 1 to 3 to return full-time to classrooms from 22 February. Scottish Government announce non-domestic rates relief extended for the 2021-22 period.

**17 February** – Scottish Government announce an expansion of testing to include anyone who is identified as a close contact of somebody who has tested positive for COVID-19, from 18 February.

**20 February** – Scottish Government announce routine indoor visiting of care home residents will resume from early March with care providers supporting residents to have up to two designated visitors each and one visit a week for each visitor.

**22 February** – Scottish Government announce people with underlying health conditions and unpaid carers are beginning to receive vaccinations. Scottish Government launch the £7 million Equality and Human Rights Fund.

**23 February** – Scottish Government publish the updated Strategic Framework, setting out the broad order of priority for re-opening and the conditions that need to be met to start lifting restrictions.

**24 February** – Scottish Government announce the Scotland Food & Drink Partnership's Regional Food Fund has reopened for applications. Scottish Government announce the launch of the £15 million Scottish Community Leaders Fund to support affordable lending services.

**25 February** – Scottish Government announce Scotland's vaccination programme has delivered first doses of vaccine to a third (33.4%) of those eligible totaling more than 1.5 million people. The UK Chief Medical Officers issue a joint statement that the UK COVID-19 alert level move from Level 5 to Level 4.

**26 February** – Scottish Government launch the Workforce Specialist Service, a new specialist service offering confidential mental health assessment and treatment to health and social care professionals. Scottish Government announce access to testing is now available from 21 fire stations across the Highlands and Argyll & Bute. Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) issues interim advice on Phase 2 of vaccination programme rollout. Evidence suggests an age-based approach remains the most effective way of reducing death and hospitalisation from COVID-19.

**28 February** – Scottish Government announce 3 cases of a COVID-19 variant of concern first identified in Manaus, Brazil, have been identified in Scotland.

**2 March** – Scottish Government announce Phase 2 of schools return. All remaining primary school children are set to return to school full-time from 15 March, with all secondary pupils returning on a part-time bases from that date.

**3 March** – UK Government announce the Furlough Scheme and Universal Credit uplift will be extended until the end of September.

**4 March** – Medical and Health Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) announce modified COVID-19 vaccines for variants will be fast-tracked.

**5 March** – Scottish Government rolls out routine testing to high -risk workplaces. Food production and processing business are urged to sign up for routine staff testing to help identify cases of COVID-19, keep workforces safe and break the chain of transmission. Free lateral flow antigen kits are to be made available to eligible businesses.

**6 March** – Scotland's vaccination programme has delivered second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to more than half of care home residents. It is stated that no further cases of the Brazilian variant of COVID-19 have been identified in Scotland.

**8 March** – Scottish Government announce the extension of The Tenant Hardship Loan Fund and the Private Rent Sector Landlord (non-business) COVID-19 Loan Scheme, both of which offer interest-free loans, applications will now continue to be received beyond the original deadline of the 31<sup>st</sup> of March.

**9 March** – Scottish Government announce vaccinations for those aged between 55 and 59 will start from the week of the 15<sup>th</sup> of March. Scottish Government also announce changes to level 4 restrictions. From 12 March, up to 4 adults from 2 households can meet locally outdoors for social and recreational purposes as well as exercise. Outdoor non-contact sports and group exercise will also resume for adults in groups of up to 15 people. Young people aged 12 to 17 will be able to meet outdoors in groups of up to 4 people from 4 different households, participate in outdoor non-contact sports, and other organised activities in groups of up to 15, travel across local authority boundaries to participate in such activities is to be permitted. There has been a further potential case of the Brazil variant of COVID-19 within Scotland, contract tracing has begun.

**10 March** – Scottish Government announce that around £533 million in grants have been paid to business through The Strategic Framework Business Fund (£214 million to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February) and the Hospitality, Retail and Leisure Top-Up Fund (£218 million to the 26<sup>th</sup> of February).

**11 March** – Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advises that homeless people and rough sleepers should be prioritized in terms of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

**15 March** – Scottish Government launch the Coronavirus Vaccine Self-Registration Service for unpaid carers.

**16 March** – Scottish Government publish their timetable for easing restrictions. Stay at Home regulations are to be lifted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April and replaced with guidance to Stay Local, with more services including hairdressers, garden centres and non-essential click and collect services being able to open from the 5<sup>th</sup> of April.

**17 March** – Scottish Government announce that Scotland's vaccination programmes has delivered first vaccine doses to more than 2 million people (44% of the adult population). An updated testing strategy is also published, this includes a £13 million investment in 2021/22 in order to establish Scotland's own genomic sequencing service, aimed at tracking new COVID-19 variants and managing any future outbreaks. The Scottish Government announce two new recovery funds these being the City Centres Recovery Fund (£2 million) and the Regional Recovery Fund (£2 million).

**18 March** – Scottish Government announce the closure of NHS Louisa Jordan from the 31<sup>st</sup> of March. The Mass Vaccination Centre present within the Hospital is to be relocated to The SSE Hydro. The UK Regulator confirms that individuals should continue to receive the COVID-19 AstraZeneca vaccine, despite suspensions by some countries over suspected links to blood clotting. The MHRA confirms that the benefits of the vaccine in preventing COVID-19 far outweigh the associated risk.

**19 March** – Additional restrictions on travellers arriving in Scotland from Ethiopia, Oman, Qatar and Somalia are imposed. The restrictions which were in place in terms of both Portugal and Mauritius are removed. The Scottish Government announce £4.5 million funding over a period of three years to establish a dedicated network of mental health clinicians to support those who have been hospitalised as a result of COVID-19, it is estimated that this will benefit around 3,000 people. It is also announced that GP practices within the most deprived communities are to receive £3.17 million to fund dedicated welfare rights advisors to address growing mental health concerns caused by money and housing insecurity and the impacts which COVID-19 has had in this regard. This is aimed at reducing the pressure on GP's and primary care services, allowing them to focus on clinical care and treatment for patients while dedicated advisors support individuals to address their social and economic needs. This is due to start from September 2021 and forms part of the COVID-19 Recovery and Resilience Plan. Round Two the Better Places Green Recovery Fund is announced,

£2.75 million put in place to support activities within the areas who suffered the most countryside related visitor pressures in the 2021 season.

**23 March** – Scottish Government announce that the Western Isles are to move to Level 3 as of 18.00 on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. All other council areas are to remain at their current level, with restrictions in place regarding any non-essential travel or access across local authority boundaries. However, from the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, individuals across the whole of Scotland are to be able to attend places of worship in gatherings of up to 50, where there is space for physical distancing. The COVID Community Memorial Projects Fund (£4.1 million) is announced, this is to enable communities to remember those who have lost their lives to COVID in their own way (e.g. by way of a commemorative garden, memorial or artwork) and is to be administered by Greenspace Scotland. The Armed Forces Third Sector Resilience Fund (£1 million) is also announced, this is to support the Armed Forces charities across Scotland in offsetting the shortfall in income as a result of the pandemic.

**24 March** – The Latest business support information is published. This states that business have benefited from more than £1.94 billion in grants paid directly to them since March 2020. This is in addition to £965 million non-domestic rates relief. It is confirmed that grants of up to £7,500 for retailers and up to £19,500 for hospitality and leisure business will be paid in April to assist with the progressive opening of such premises, these one-off payments replace the former Strategic Framework Business Fund Payments. The Scottish Government also confirm that they are extending the 100% non-domestic rates relief for retail, leisure, hospitality and aviation businesses for the whole of the next financial year. A Tourism Recovery Programme (£25 million) is announced, this is aimed at supporting the sector's recovery from the pandemic. It is announced that a new 3-year, Social Enterprise Action Plan, which includes additional investment of over £5 million, is to be put in to support the sector through education, support and opportunity. A national "Summer of Play" (£20 million) is announced. This is aimed at delivering a range of activities for children and young people and their families over the summer, that ensure that there are opportunities for all to socialise, play and reconnect with their local communities and environment, with a view to helping address the impacts which the pandemic has had on the health of children and young people.

## **Quarter 2    01/04/21 to 30/06/21**

**6 April** – Scottish Government announce that the majority of pupils are to return to school full time following the easter break. Children who are on the shielding list have been advised to stay at home until the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, in line with the Chief Medical Officer's advice. This follows the national expansion of lateral flow testing, with twice weekly tests being made available to all school staff and secondary school pupils. The strict 2m physical distancing between pupils within secondary schools is to be removed with the schools being tasked to consider other mitigations. The Chief

Statistician releases figures in terms of the uptake of funding up until February 2021, from the Scottish Welfare Fund, The Self-Isolation Support Grant and the Discretionary Housing Payments.

**13 April** – Scottish Government announces accelerated easing of restrictions. Travel within Scotland for outdoor socialising, recreation and exercise will be allowed from the 16th April. People must continue to Stay Local for other purposes such as non-essential shopping and public transport capacity will continue to be limited. Outdoor meetings in groups of up to 6 adults from up to 6 households will be allowed, with under 12's not counting towards the limit. Socialising in homes is still not permitted at this stage. Should data permit, it is proposed that the whole of Scotland will enter Level 3 from the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, meaning:

- non-essential travel between Scotland, England and Wales will be permitted, tourist accommodation can reopen subject to certain rules,
- shops will be able to fully reopen with precautions in place including physical distancing requirements, face masks and hand sanitiser in place,
- gyms and indoor sports facilities (incl. swimming pools), will reopen for individual exercise, with group activities permitted for under-18's, and all organised outdoor activity can resume except adult contact sport,
- limits on attendance at life events, including weddings, civil partnerships, funerals and receptions for those will increase to 50, with alcohol permitted,
- pubs, cafes and restaurants will reopen outdoors for groups of up to 6 people from up to 6 households with alcohol being allowed in line with local licensing policy, and indoors for groups of up to 6 people from up to 2 households without alcohol until 20.00 hrs,
- takeaways will be able to resume normal service, with physical distancing and face masks in premises,
- mobile close contact services such as hairdressers, barbers and beauty salons can resume,
- non-essential work in other people's homes will resume.

Further reviews will take place to consider travel arrangements with the rest of the Common Travel Area as well as Northern Ireland ahead of the lifting of restrictions on 26<sup>th</sup> of April. An Updated Strategic Framework Protection Level Table is published showing the route map for future easings (these include new limits on attendance at public events from Level 2 and below). Self-assessment guidance is to be published to assist and enable businesses to calculate the specific capacity limits for their premises.

**19 April** – Travellers from India are to be subject to additional restrictions when arriving in Scotland from 04.00 on The 23<sup>rd</sup> of April.

**20 April** – Scottish Government announce all parts of the country will move to Level 3 from Monday 26<sup>th</sup> of April. Hospitality venues such as café's, pubs and restaurants can reopen, along with tourist accommodation.

**25 April** – Scottish Government announce free lateral flow test kits to be available for anyone without symptoms from Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> of April.

**14 May** – The World Health Organisation classifies the COVID-19 B.1.617 mutation first found in India, as a variant of concern. The Scottish Government announce most of mainland Scotland will move to Level 2 from the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, with eased restrictions on hospitality, entertainment, education and sport. This is with the exception of Glasgow and Moray who will remain in Level 3 from the 17<sup>th</sup> of May due to high rates of COVID-19, travel to and from these areas is prohibited other than for permitted purposes. Most islands move to Level 1. The number of people and households that can meet inside homes in Level 2 has been increased to 6 people from 3 households. From the 17<sup>th</sup> of May, anyone entering Scotland from countries on a new international 'Green List' will not be required to quarantine on arrival but will have to take a PCR test for COVID-19.

**15 May** – Scottish Government announce Scotland's vaccination roll-out has reached two thirds of the eligible population.

**18 May** – Scottish Government – John Swinney is appointed as Cabinet Secretary for COVID Recovery.

**19 May** – Scottish Government launches the COVID-19 vaccination status scheme. This service will provide confirmation of vaccination when required for foreign travel.

**21 May** – Scottish Government announce Moray is to move to Level 2 from midnight on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May. Glasgow is to remain at Level 3.

**22 May** – Scottish Government donate 100 oxygen concentrators and 40 continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) ventilators to the Indian Government to support its fight against COVID-19.

**26 May** – Scottish Government announce £3 million Destination and Sector Marketing Fund for tourism organisations to promote key visitor destinations in a responsible and sustainable way. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approves the one-dose Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for use in the UK.

**1 June** – Scottish Government announce Glasgow will move to Level 2 on the 5<sup>th</sup> of June, while 15 mainland Local Authorities will move to Level 1 (includes Aberdeenshire). All Islands currently in Level 1 will move to Level 0 at the same time due to sustained low numbers of cases.

**2 June** – Scottish Government announce £12 million of funding for business in Level 2 areas – including those in hospitality, events, weddings and soft plat sectors, additional funding for taxis and operators and £25 million to support the culture sector.

**3 June** – Scottish Government announce Education Scotland and the SQA will be reformed as part of Scotland's education recovery plans. They also announce £1 million funding to support legal aid and trainees. It is announced that Portugal will be placed on the amber travel list.

**4 June** – Scottish Government announce £1 million support for Armed Forces charities. Professor Julie Fitzpatrick OBE is appointed as the Scottish Government's next Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA). Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approves the Pfizer / BioNTech vaccine for use in 12-15 year olds. International Health Ministers from the G7 have committed to a new international agreement making it easier and quicker to share results from vaccine and therapeutic trials to tackle COVID-19 and prevent future health threats.

**9 June** – Scottish Government announce rapid tests kits to be rolled out to community pharmacies from the 9<sup>th</sup> of June.

**10 June** – It is announced that additional funding of up to £5 million pounds is to be made available to NHS dentists to help remobilise services as Scotland recovers from the coronavirus pandemic aimed at helping them to meet safety standards and see more patients.

**11 June** – Scottish Government announce the expansion of the national vaccination programme to include international states.

**13 June** – Scottish Government announce £20 million of additional funding for students impacted by COVID-19. The second vaccine doses are brought forward for over 40's to help combat the Delta variant. It is announced that rapid lateral flow test kits will be mailed from tomorrow to all visitors to the UEFA Euro 2000 Fan Zone at Glasgow Green to encourage testing. This will include contacting 17,000 ticket holders. In addition, a mobile testing bus is to be situated at Glasgow Green to provide on-site lateral flow testing.

**15 June** – First Minister confirms that there will be no changes this week in terms of the COVID levels of protection that currently apply to different parts of country. It is announced that given the increase in cases and the impact of the new Delta variant that it is unlikely that any part of the country will move down a level from the 28<sup>th</sup> of June (*the date when it was hoped that the whole country would be moving to Level 0*) and that the easing of restrictions is likely to be paused for a further 3 weeks to allow the vaccination programme to press ahead as quickly as possible (and in particular

with the delivery of second doses (*movement from 12 week cycle between vaccinations to 8 week cycle*), this decision however is still to be made and will be confirmed next week following a full review. It is also announced that next week two pieces of work will be published next week, one of which, will detail what life will look like beyond Level 0, and the second of which will provide the outcome in terms of the review of physical distancing and the impact of the new delta variant in terms of greater transmissibility.

**16 June** – Scottish Government announce £20 million for the second phase of the National Transition Training Fund (NTTF). It is also announced that a further £90,000 is to be provided to support women involved in prostitution who have been affected by the pandemic.

**17 June** – Scottish Government announce that despite unprecedented challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic the Scottish Budget was balanced last year. The 2020-21 Provisional Budget Outrun shows 99% of the £48 billion budget was spent and the remaining 1% will be carried over to 2021-22 to help support pandemic recovery.

**18 June** – The Scottish Government announce that due to a rise in the prevalence of the Delta variant cases travel restrictions are to be placed on both Manchester and Salford. The new rules on travel between Scotland and these cities comes into effect on Monday (21<sup>st</sup> of June). This is part of wider measures put in place to prevent variants of concern being brought into Scotland from areas with high cases of the COVID-19 Delta variant. A six-month extension of emergency measures granted under the Scottish Coronavirus Acts is to be debated in parliament next week following today's introduction of The Coronavirus (Extension and Expiry) (Scotland) Bill. It is announced that the first vaccine doses have been booked in for all adults ahead of schedule prior to the end of next week, 5 weeks ahead of the previous target of the 31<sup>st</sup> of July.

**22 June** – The First Minister announces a new indicative date for the whole of Scotland to move to level 0 with this being set for the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2021, provided all necessary vaccination and harm reduction measures are met. Subject to confirmation a further indicative date for the lifting of all major COVID-19 restrictions is put in place for the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 2021.

**23 June** – The Scottish Parliament's COVID-19 Recovery Committee meets for the first time.

**24 June** – The Coronavirus (Extension and Expiry) (Scotland) Bill is passed by the Scottish Parliament at Stage 3. The UK Government announce findings from an English study which shows over a third of people who have had COVID-19 reported symptoms lasting at least 12 weeks suggesting the prevalence of 'long COVID' increases with age.

**27 June** – The Scottish Government announce the opening of a self-registration portal for all over 18's. They also announce an £8 million funding package for health and social care workforce wellbeing.

**29 June** – The Scottish Government announce that the travel restrictions in respect of Manchester, Salford and Bolton are to be lifted from 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2021.

**30 June** – The Scottish Government announce that social care personal assistants are to receive a £500 payment. The JCVI issues interim advice on COVID-19 booster vaccinations stating that any potential booster programme should be offered in 2 stages from September 2021, starting with those who are at most risk of serious disease.

### **Quarter 3 01/07/21 to 30/09/21**

**2 July** – The Scottish Government announce that all mainland Health Boards will offer drop-in Coronavirus Vaccination Clinics from the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2021. They also announce £380 million of additional funding to help Health Boards with pandemic costs.

**3 July** – The Scottish Government announce that Test and Protect will prioritise high risk cases with SMS text messages being used more extensively for low risk index cases and direct telephone calls for those deemed to be of a high risk.

**7 July** – The Scottish Government announce the lifting of the travel restrictions to Blackburn.

**9 July** – The Scottish Government announce the deployment of additional staff to bolster Test and Protect.

**13 July** – The First Minister announces that all of Scotland will move to Protection Level 0 from the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2021. Physical distancing will reduce to 1 metre in all indoor public settings and outdoors, informal social gatherings of up to 15 people from 15 households will be permitted outdoors without physical distancing. Mandatory face coverings will remain in place.

**17 July** – Scottish Government announce fully vaccinated travellers returning to Scotland from France will be required to self-isolate from Monday the 19<sup>th</sup> of July.

**18 July** – Scottish Government announce the vaccination programme will complete first doses for all over 18's who have attended their scheduled appointments by close of play on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July. The second doses for individuals continue to be scheduled and it is expected all adults will have received them by the 12<sup>th</sup> of September.

**19 July** – JCVI issues advice on the vaccination of children and young people. Children who are at increased risk of serious COVID 19 disease should be offered the Pfizer vaccine. That includes children aged 12 to 15 with severe neurodisabilities, down's syndrome, immunosuppression and multiple or severe learning disabilities.

**23 July** – Scottish Government announce changes to self-isolation rules for close contacts of COVID-19 cases with essential staff in critical roles being allowed to return to work to maintain lifeline services and critical national infrastructure.

**28 July** – Scottish Government announce that fully vaccinated people from the EU and US will be able to travel to Scotland without quarantining from the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August.

**29 July** – Scottish Government announce £11.5 million funding to reduce waiting times as part of NHS remobilisation efforts. They also announce nine projects supporting carers and disabled people will share £1 million to tackle loneliness and isolation as a result of the pandemic.

**1 August** – Scottish Government announce children and young people aged 12-17 from key groups will be offered COVID-19 vaccine.

**3 August** – First Minister announces Scotland to move beyond Level 0 on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August. The legal requirement for physical distancing and limits on gatherings will be removed. Some protective measures will however remain such as the use of face coverings indoors and the collection of contact details as part of Test and Protect.

**4 August** – Scottish Government announce all young people 16 to 17 years of age in Scotland will be offered the COVID-19 vaccine from the 6<sup>th</sup> of August.

**7 August** – Scottish Government announce that the two metre physical distancing will remain in place at health care settings across Scotland from the 9<sup>th</sup> of August when restrictions are to be lifted elsewhere.

**12 August** – The First Minister and representatives from Scotland's Trade Unions led by the STUC General Secretary meet to discuss the key issues affecting workers as Scotland recovers from the coronavirus pandemic.

**17 August** – Scottish Government launches consultation on Scotland's recovery. This sets out a range of proposal which include whether or not some of the temporary provisions made under the Scottish and UK wide coronavirus legislation should be maintained after March 2022. The MHRA approve the use of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for children and young persons aged 12 to 17.

**21 August** – Scottish Government announce that a multi-million pound package of support has been invested to help tourism and hospitality businesses recover from the

coronavirus pandemic. The Chief Medical Officer urges pregnant women to get vaccinated.

**22 August** – UK Government launch UK wide antibody surveillance programme for the general public. Individuals may opt into this service through NHS Track and Trace with home anti-body tests being made available for up to 8,000 people per day.

**23 August** – UK Government sign a deal with Pfizer / BioNTech securing 35 million vaccines which will be delivered in the second half of 2022. The Scottish Government launch a touring fund for live music (£750,000).

**24 August** – Scottish Government invites views on the draft aims and principles of an independent public inquiry regarding their handling of the coronavirus pandemic. The Scottish Government urges people who test positive for COVID-19 to securely list details of their close contacts online when asked by Test and Protect.

**25 August** – Scottish Government announce £14 million North East Recovery and Skills Fund. This funding will provide opportunities for more than 3,000 individuals in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire through training and enterprise projects across various sectors including entrepreneurship, tourism and energy. The Scottish Government publish the NHS Recovery Plan which sets out the key actions for the next 5 years to help increase capacity by at least 10% and help address backlogs.

**26 August** – Scottish Government announce Canada and the Azores will be added to the green list for travel. The expanded list also includes Denmark and Switzerland. Thailand joins the red list for travel.

**29 August** – Scottish Government urge all under 40's to get their second dose of vaccination.

**1 September** – Scottish Government announce proposals which would require individuals to hold a Coronavirus Vaccination Certificate in order to enter certain events and high risk venues (e.g. nightclubs, festivals and football grounds). These proposals are scheduled to be put before the Scottish Parliament and voted on during the week commencing the 6<sup>th</sup> of September. QR Digital Vaccination Certificates for international travel will be available from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation ('JCVI') publish guidance advising that individuals who were severely immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second dose of the vaccine should be offered a third dose.

**3 September** – The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation ('JCVI') issue updated advice on the vaccination of children aged 12 to 15. This states that the health benefits from vaccination are marginally greater than the potential known

harms. The margin of benefit is considered too small to support the universal vaccination of health 12 to 15 year olds at this time.

**7 September** – The Scottish Government publish programme for Government 2021-22. The core priorities of the programmed are '*leading Scotland safely out of the pandemic, urgently confronting climate change, driving a green, fair economic recovery, and boosting opportunities for children and young people*'.

**9 September** – The Scottish Parliament approves Vaccine Certification Plans. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, Coronavirus Vaccination Certificates will be required to enter events such as nightclubs, music festivals and some football grounds. The Scottish Government launch a £10 million Long COVID Support Fund to help Health Boards respond to the condition.

**10 September** – The Scottish Government launch the Public Libraries COVID Recovery Fund (£1.25 million) to help libraries to reopen.

**12 September** – Scotland's largest ever vaccination programme will complete second doses for all over 18s who have attended their scheduled appointments by close of play on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September.

**13 September** – Vital aid worth £11.2 million is to be provided to Rwanda, Zambia and Malawi to help aid their responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The distribution of the required PPE and materials is being funded by the Scottish Government and the £250,000 provided will cover the transport of 25 shipping containers worth of material.

**14 September** – The Scottish Government announce children aged 12 to 15 will be offered a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine from the 20<sup>th</sup> of September. It is also announced that safety mitigations to keep children, young people and staff safe in schools will be extended until at least the October holidays, this includes distancing, the use of face coverings by pupils in secondary schools and a strengthened recommendation in terms of lateral flow testing. The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency ('MHRA') publishes a regulatory update on the COVID-19 booster vaccine programme for winter 2021-22. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation ('JCVI') publish guidance advising that booster vaccines will be offered to those most at risk from serious disease, and those who were vaccinated during Phase 1 of the vaccine programme.

**15 September** – New guidance allows care home residents to choose a friend or relative as a 'named visitor' who will be able to visit them, even during a managed COVID-19 outbreak.

**17 September** – The UK Government relax and simplify the system relating to International Travel restrictions with a movement to a green and red list removing the

amber classification. The new system also removes the requirement for a pre-departure test in England as well as the need to use lateral flow tests on date two this though has not been adopted in Scotland. The Scottish Government confirm that they will move to the relaxed and simplified travel restriction from the 4<sup>th</sup> of October. The UK Government announce that Ronapreve will be rolled out to vulnerable hospital patients this being the first neutralizing antibody medicine specifically designed to treat COVID-19 authorised for use in the UK.

**20 September** – Residents in care homes for older people are offered coronavirus booster vaccinations and these will be given alongside the flu vaccination following confirmation from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation ('JCVI') gave their approval. This will then be rolled out to frontline health and social care workers from the 21<sup>st</sup> of September, adults aged 70 or older or those on the high risk list (previously known as shielding) from the end of September and other eligible groups in October. Those on the highest risk list i.e. those who were severely immunosuppressed at the time of their last COVID-19 vaccination will be offered a third primary dose instead of the booster.

**21 September** – The Scottish Government announce additional funding of £20 million for the Scottish Ambulance Service ('SAS') to help improve response times, alleviate pressures and improve staff wellbeing.

**22 September** – More than 10 million COVID-19 PCR tests (10,017,000) have been carried out in Scotland over the past 19 months since testing began.

**24 September** – The Scottish Government announce that travellers from non-red list countries who have been fully vaccinated in a country that meets the recognised standards of certifications will no longer be required to provide evidence of a negative test result before they can travel to Scotland from the 4<sup>th</sup> of October. A five-week consultation on introducing 'Anne's Law' – to ensure people who live in adult care homes have rights to be able to have direct contact with people who are important to them in order to support their health and wellbeing.

**27 September** – The Scottish Government announce that all 12-15 year olds who haven't yet received their COVID-19 vaccination will receive letters of offer from today.

**30 September** – The Scottish Government publish an updated 2021 Vaccination Strategy. This includes plans for COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccinations in Autumn and Winter 2021 to 2022 in Scotland. It is announced that invitations for COVID-19 have been issued to people aged 70 and over and those aged 16 and over who are at highest risk, with appointments scheduled from the week beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> of October.

#### **Quarter 4 01/10/21 to 31/12/21**

**1 October** – The Scottish Government’s Vaccination Certification Scheme comes into operation. People attending certain late night venues and larger indoor and outdoor live events will be required to show staff proof of their COVID status or a valid exemption. The NHS Scotland Covid Status App is made available via the NHS Inform site.

**5 October** – The Scottish Government publish both the ‘Coronavirus (COVID-19) education recovery: key actions and next steps’ and ‘Covid Recovery Strategy: for a fairer future’. They also announce a £300 million NHS and Care Winter Package.

**7 October** – The Scottish Government announce 47 countries will be taken off the international travel red list from the 11<sup>th</sup> of October. In addition, vaccine certificates from a further 37 countries will be recognised to allow quarantine-free travel to Scotland. They also announce £1.6 million funding to help local authorities deliver services that can support people affected by psychological trauma and adversity.

**15 October** – The Scottish Government announce NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Borders will receive military assistance from the 19<sup>th</sup> of October. The Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund is launched (£15 million).

**18 October** – The Scottish Government announce that the Coronavirus Vaccine Certification Scheme has become subject to enforcement.

**19 October** – The Scottish Government announce school mitigations will remain in place. Pupils will continue to be required to wear face coverings in secondary school classrooms as they begin to return from the October break.

**20 October** – The Scottish Government launch NHS Scotland Academy, a collaboration between NHS Golden Jubilee and NHS Education for Scotland, backed by £9 million of investment.

**22 October** – The Scottish Government publish the adult social care ‘Winter Preparedness Plan 2021-22’.

**25 October** – Invitations for the flu and COVID-19 Booster Vaccination Programmes begin for the next eligible groups. Invitation letters for people aged 60 to 69 and adults aged 16 and over with underlying health conditions are to be sent out.

**26 October** – The Scottish Government is to allocate a further £482 million to NHS Boards and Integration Authorities to meet the costs of the pandemic and remobilizing health services. The First Minister announces that from 4 am on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October, people travelling to Scotland can take a lateral flow test – rather than a PCR test – on

day two of their arrival. Travellers can book lateral flow tests from the list of providers on the gov.uk site from around 5 pm on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October.

**28 October** – The Scottish Government announce the final 7 countries are to be removed from the international travel red list from the 1<sup>st</sup> of November, meaning travellers to the UK from those destinations will no longer have to stay in hotel quarantine for 10 days on arrival.

**29 October** – Scottish (and other UK) Covid Status Certificates are adopted into the European Union's Digital Covid Certificate (EU DCC) Scheme. From the 1<sup>st</sup> of November, Covid Status Certificates will be recognised by more than 40 countries. All EU DCC member countries will have their full certificates recognised and verifiable in Scotland.

**31 October** – The Scottish Government had committed £32 million to create a further 139 trainee doctor posts to support services under greatest pressure during the ongoing recovery from COVID-19.

**1 November** – It is announced that the military are to be brought in to support the national Autumn / Winter vaccination programme. Marketing campaign launched to highlight the benefit of both the flu and COVID-19 booster jabs encouraging individuals to take up the offer when invited.