

STANDING ORDER 41 – QUESTIONS – URGENT BUSINESS

Mr Councillor J.E. Skinner to ask the Leader of the Council:

1. Will the Leader make a statement regarding what provisions are
  - (a) In place,
  - (b) To be put in place

In order to ensure that all front line services provided by Douglas Borough Council particularly and most importantly housing emergency repairs, refuse collection, crematorium operations and many other Council services are to be maintained in the event of COVID-19 virus finding its way to the Island resulting in officers and staff having to self-isolate and take time off work should they become infected by the virus?

*Response by the Leader of the Council:*

*(a) What provisions are in place?*

*During the past week, the following steps have been taken in relation to coronavirus:*

- *Information and advice from the IOM Government website on the virus has been made available to staff*
- *Updates will be issued to staff as and when new advice is available or if the situation changes*
- *Staff have been made aware of who to contact if they have a cough, fever or shortness of breath or if they have been to any of the listed countries recently*
- *Staff dealing with housing issues/emergency repairs are already provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), any other staff having to attend sites where public may have Coronavirus will be provided with the same*
- *FFP3 masks and Positive Pressure masks used for loft spaces in Council houses are held in stock*
- *(PPE) held in stock*
- *Staff have been reminded of the need to exercise proper hygiene routines and to wash their hands frequently*
- *Guidance has been provided on washing hands and on how to prevent the spread of the disease*
- *Hand gels and wipes have been issued and continue to be sourced*
- *Additional staff currently being trained in the operation of cremators*
- *The IOM Government website is being monitored on a daily basis*
- *The Crisis Management Working Group has met and begun business continuity planning in case of a change in status of the illness*

*(b) What provisions are to be put in place?*

- *If infection reaches the IOM social distancing may be implemented and this will include staff working from home*
- *Policies will be reviewed and staff training requirements identified and appropriate training provided to ensure staff are familiar with operational procedures relating to various equipment/vehicles*
- *A business continuity plan is being developed and implemented taking into account relevant legal and regulatory obligations and to ensure critical services (crematorium, waste collection, sheltered housing and housing emergency repairs) can be maintained*
- *Conflicting essential services will be effectively prioritised and managed*
- *As a duty of care and to ensure compliance with health and safety duties the Council will manage the impact on employees*
- *Contractual risks will be managed*

STANDING ORDER 41 – QUESTIONS – URGENT BUSINESS

- *Visitors to public buildings restricted*
  - *Financial arrangements will be managed*
  - *Wider operational risk will be managed*
  - *Face to face meetings suspended and Skype/Facetime implemented*
  - *Douglas Borough Council will continue to follow the advice issued by the IOM Government as it would not be appropriate to act independently*
  - *Douglas Borough Council will monitor and respond to developments*
  - *IOM Government has been updating advice regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19) on a daily basis.*
  - *As of Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March it states 19 concluded tests have taken place with 0 confirmed cases on the island*
  - *IOM Government at the present time continues to place the risk to the public on the island as **LOW***
-