(9xiii) **Mr J Bruce**

To the Leader of the Council

"What plans does the Council have in place should there be a localised flare up of Covid-19 within the Highlands and what is its role as a lead public agency partner in implementing any area specific lockdowns?"

The Council has a Joint Health Protection Plan (JHPP) in Place with NHS Highland and Argyll & Bute Councils. It was reviewed and reported to the EDI Committee in January 2019, see

https://www.highland.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/74825/item_18_-_joint_health_protection_plan

This outlines the roles between the different partner agencies in responding to public health incidents and will include any local covid outbreaks.

NHS Highland would lead any such response to a localised flare up of Covid 19 and would set up an Incident Management Team (IMT), if deemed necessary to manage any such outbreak. The IMT will be chaired by the Consultant in Public Health Medicine (CPHM), and they would determine the support required by the Council depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Highland Council support and involvement would come from:

- the Environmental Service who are our main resource for health protection issues. They also have the principal local responsibility for reducing the risks from many environmental hazards. They liaise closely with their NHS colleagues in the investigation and control of outbreaks of infections and will often be the enforcement arm of the teams set up to manage these incidents. Highland Council has currently 5 Environmental Health Officers who have undertaken training with NHS Highland in contact tracing and so they would also be able to support the Scottish Government's Test & Protect policy if required in any localised outbreak;

- our humanitarian assistance service. The arrangements for this are to be considered separately to this meeting of the Council and set out in the report on the Council on Review of Covid-19 services: Humanitarian assistance and food supply. National guidance is evolving and there is a requirement for us to support people required to self-isolate through the test and Protect programme;

- any potential future disruption to Council services arising from:
  - any staff absence occurring from the Test and Protect programme; and/or
  - any localised lockdown arising from the Test and protect programme.

We have experience from our covid response so far to be able to manage any future disruption and the public has shown general understanding and compliance.

For further information:

- detailed guidance on how such incidents would be managed is contained in Public Health Scotland guidance - "*Management of Public Health Incidents: Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of NHS Led Incident Management Teams*". https://hpspubsrepo.blob.core.windows.net/hps-website/nss/1673/documents/1_shpn-12-management-public-health-incidents.pdf

- The Government's Test, Trace, Isolate and Support strategy can be accessed at:https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-test-trace-isolate-support/