

CVDR/S6/21/9/4

COVID-19 Recovery Committee

**9th Meeting, 2021 (Session 6), Thursday 4
November 2021**

Baseline health protection measures: preparing for winter and pathways to recovery

Introduction

1. At its meeting on 28 October 2021, the Committee agreed to undertake a short inquiry into baseline health protection measures: preparing for winter and pathways to recovery.
2. The inquiry will focus on three broad policy areas:
 - health and social care services;
 - the hospitality, business and leisure sectors; and
 - schools.
3. At this meeting, the Committee will take evidence from the following—
 - Dr Hywel Davies, Technical Director, Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers;
 - Dr Shaun Fitzgerald OBE FREng, Director, Centre for Climate Repair at Cambridge, University of Cambridge;
 - Professor Catherine Noakes, Professor of Environmental Engineering for Buildings, University of Leeds
 - Professor Tim Sharpe, Head of Architecture, University of Strathclyde.

Background

4. This inquiry will consider what role baseline health protection measures, in particular ventilation, will play in lessening the impact of COVID-19 over the winter period. It will also investigate what measures are required to support long-term recovery.

5. The “continued promotion of good ventilation” is one of the main baseline health protection measures contained in the [Scottish Government’s Strategic Framework for ‘Life After Level 0’](#). Alongside the Strategic Framework, the Scottish Government has published general guidance for [improving ventilation](#) in workplace/commercial settings. The Scottish Government has also committed funding to supporting improved ventilation in some settings.

6. On 3 August 2021, the First Minister announced that local authorities would receive an additional £10 million to support enhanced ventilation in schools, [informing parliament](#) that–

“Ventilation is one of the most important ways in which the risk of Covid transmission can be reduced – and so improving it will be vital, now and in the future, to ensure that schools and childcare centres are as safe as possible.”

7. The Scottish Government wrote to the Committee on 19 October to explain that existing baseline health protection measures in schools are to remain in line with its guidance on [Reducing Risks in Schools](#) (last updated on 1 October 2021).

8. On 29 October 2021, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills [wrote](#) to the Education, Children and Young People Committee updating it on the outcome of CO² assessments being undertaken by local authorities across Scotland’s learning estate. This is attached at the Annexe.

9. On 28 September 2021, the Scottish Government [announced](#) a £25 million package to improve ventilation and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in a range of high-risk settings where people come into close proximity, including restaurants, bars and gyms.

Next steps

10. The Committee will take further evidence on this inquiry at its meetings in November 2021.

**Committee Clerks
November 2021**