

Decision making during COVID-19

- On 16 March 2020 the Council invoked its major incident plan to manage the COVID-19 emergency with the response structure of bronze, silver and gold command.
- On 25 March 2020 the Coronavirus Act 2020 was enacted in order to implement a national lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The requirements of the lockdown arrangements caused the cancellation or postponement of all decision making meetings which councils were required to hold face to face.
- Virtual meetings were gradually introduced from June, following new government regulations relaxing the requirements for meetings to be held face to face.

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- In order to ensure continued timely responses, on 26 March 2020 the Mayor of Middlesbrough delegated authority to the Chief Executive to make Executive decisions of a policy, financial and operational nature in response to the COVID-19 emergency.
- This was reported to the Executive on 16 June 2020 as part of the comprehensive report on response and recovery and to Council on 2 September 2020.
- This authority is used by the Chief Executive when chairing Gold Command.

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- The delegated authority was broadened in August to offer greater resilience and allows the Chief Executive to nominate a deputy to make Executive decisions of a policy, financial and operational response to the COVID-19 emergency
- As business as usual has resumed, the emergency delegation is only used where a decision is required in a timeframe in which it is not possible to arrange a meeting of the Executive or an Individual Executive.

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- Details of decisions taken by the Gold Command have been reported to OSB and Executive.
- The decision-making process utilised during the first wave of COVID-19 is one of a range of factors being reviewed to inform the Council's new Coronavirus plan, which is currently in development.
- A scheduled internal audit of decision making will also review decisions made in the first wave, and any learning from this will inform our future approach.