

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary
for Covid Recovery
John Swinney MSP



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

E: DFMCSCR@gov.scot

Sandra Black
Chair, Community Planning Improvement
Board
Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Council
sandra.black@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Your ref: SB/MAMcG/210811 CPIB
14 October 2021

Dear Ms Black,

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Community Planning Improvement Board, dated 11 August 2021, sharing evidence you have compiled on the critical role of Community Planning during Covid, and the role it can play in supporting local and national recovery. Your letter also requested a joint meeting with myself and Cllr Evison, to collectively explore how the work of the CPIB can support the Covid recovery plan.

I welcome the findings of your report. It adds a solid body of evidence to a picture I had already drawn from what I have witnessed and heard, that communities and local public services and third sector organisations have worked together fantastically well to help people in crisis in these unprecedented times.

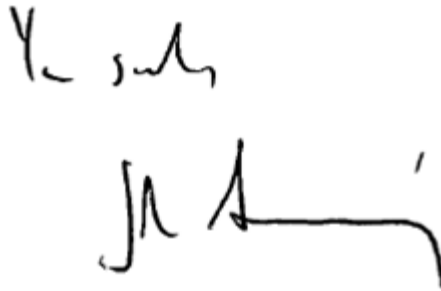
The messages in your letter and the report about the potential of community planning to be a driving force for Covid Recovery also resonate strongly with me. We cannot return to old ways of working. The communities hit hardest by the pandemic were usually those who were already experiencing disadvantage. So our approach to Covid Recovery has to be about genuine renewal, with a clear focus on concerted work to tackle the deep-rooted inequalities that too many people in Scotland experience.

As you will be aware, on the 5th October we published our Covid Recovery Strategy for Scotland. The Strategy clearly sets out our ambitions in detail, with expectations for public services, local partners and Scottish Government.

As your report rightly makes clear, community planning will be an essential vehicle through which public services, other partners and communities themselves can pursue Covid Recovery and other priorities, in joined up and seamless ways that flex around the distinctive needs of different communities.

I would be delighted to accept your offer for a joint meeting with the CPIB and Cllr Evison. I suggest that Mr Arthur, as Minister with responsibility for community planning, should also be invited to attend this meeting. Please contact my Private Office at DFMCSCR@gov.scot to make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Swinney', written in a cursive style.

JOHN SWINNEY