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31 July 2020

Dear Colleagues

I am writing to update you on the latest position with regard to the operation of funfairs and fairground attractions.

As part of the 30 July review, the reopening of funfairs has been given an indicative start date of 24 August, to be confirmed at the review taking place on 20 August.

As you are aware COVID-19 is still highly infectious and extremely dangerous and this means we need to consider ways in which we can avoid spreading the virus by reducing surface transmission. As a result of the work undertaken with regard to the operation of funfairs, we have a better understanding of the levels of transmission risk associated with the use of fairground rides, including those in non-funfair locations.  In view of this increased understanding we are now recommending that fairground rides in locations outwith funfairs should also remain closed.

We can only re-open services and restart the economy if infection rates continue to be low.  We don’t want any businesses to remain closed or open with restrictions in place, for a day longer than is necessary but public health is paramount. Decisions on re-opening are being made as part of the public health response to the spread and incidence of coronavirus in Scotland due to continuing concerns about public health risks as we gradually re-open the economy.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 currently require a person responsible for carrying on a business or providing a service listed in Part 2 of schedule 1 to cease carrying on that business or providing that service. Funfairs ” are listed in part 2 number 19 of that schedule. Such premises are currently prohibited from operating/opening to the public.  Given the ongoing need to suppress the virus and to maintain a consistent approach, it is now advised that fairground rides in other locations should also remain closed. These other locations may be able to operate some other parts of their business, for example mini golf, zoo/animal attractions and gardens in line with re-opening of these sectors, and following appropriate guidance.

This decision to recommend that other fairground rides should be closed alongside funfairs has not been taken lightly, but is considered necessary to discourage the risk of transmission of coronavirus via hard surfaces touched by multiple customers, along with other risks associated with large crowds for example shouting and screaming whilst enjoying the rides.  These risks are very real and apply whether the ride is located in a funfair or elsewhere.

We will move to re-open Scotland’s funfairs and rides, and amend our guidance, as soon as it is safe to do so. I hope that we can continue to work together as part of the Scottish Government’s gradual approach to re-opening the economy.

Yours sincerely



**PROFESSOR JASON LEITCH**