

From: Charlie Stewart
Sent: 27 March 2020 18:48
Subject: Covid-19 Update 27 Mar

Dear Councillors

I hope you are staying safe Here is the latest update

National Position

As the lockdown continues to be enforced, the government yesterday (26 March) strengthened police enforcement powers in England to reduce the spread of coronavirus. If members of the public do not comply the police may:

- Instruct them to go home, leave an area or disperse
- ensure parents are taking necessary steps to stop their children breaking these rules
- issue a fixed penalty notice of £60, which will be lowered to £30 if paid within 14 days
- issue a fixed penalty notice of £120 for second time offenders, doubling on each further repeat offence

Yesterday (26 March) evening, the Chancellor announced that millions of self-employed individuals will receive direct cash grants through a UK-wide scheme. Those eligible will receive a cash grant worth 80% of their average monthly trading profit over the last three years, up to £2,500 per month for at least 3 months. The scheme covers 95% of people who receive the majority of their income from self-employment.

More information on the announcement:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-gives-support-to-millions-of-self-employed-individuals>

Guidance on claiming a grant: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme#who-can-apply>

Key messages for your residents

The single most important action we can all take, in fighting coronavirus, is to stay at home in order to protect the NHS and save lives. People should only leave their houses for one of four reasons:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.

- any medical need, including to donate blood, avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home

When you are outside, you need to stay safe. You should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensure you are 2 metres (6 feet) apart from anyone outside of your household.

This guidance outlines how you can help and importantly, how to do this safely:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely--2>

Coronavirus scams

The Insolvency Service warns members of the public to be vigilant in the face of scams connected to the coronavirus. These scams might take the form of pensions transfers, high-return investment opportunities or health insurance supplements. Amongst other precautions, the public should:

- not give out personal details (bank details, address, existing insurance/pensions/investment details)
- beware of adverts on social media channels and paid for/sponsored adverts online
- be wary of promised returns that sound too good to be true
- get the company's name and establish their credentials using the Financial Conduct Authority's Financial Services Register

Further advice is available here: <https://www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart>

If a member of the public suspects that they may have been contacted in what could be a scam, they can call Action Fraud straight away on 0300 123 2040 or make a complaint to the insolvency service here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-a-complaint-to-the-insolvency-service>

Our Services

Our services are still holding up and I hope you will join me in thanking all our staff who are working so hard to keep things going.

Housing Needs has been working hard to getting rough sleepers off the street and all that we know are now housed; so we are ahead of Louise Casey's target. People have asked if we should be doing a street count of rough sleepers. However, MHCLG advise that we should not do a street count as it risks spreading the virus.

Going forward during this crisis, there is no need for anyone to rough sleep. Anyone contacting us who is homeless and has nowhere they can reasonably stay will be accommodated. We expect the numbers of single homeless to rise significantly over the next few weeks, and we're developing more accommodation solutions.

Any sightings of rough sleepers during the emergency can be reported to Housing Needs. Toyin Ogunwobi is our Rough Sleeping Co-ordinator. Or via Street Link (0300 5000 0914 or Streetlink App).

Northwick Park is preparing for a further surge of Covid patients ; and now have over 200 Covid+patients . By middle of next week 75% of beds will be for Covid patients only and extra capacity is being created by all means possible.

The Hot Hub testing at Alexander avenue is ramping up the numbers by the day and the Pinn medical centre will no longer be a walk in , due to the risks

There are no children of key workers without **school or early years provision** available to them in Harrow . Some schools are beginning to use local clustering arrangements to maximise use of resources and the Harrow School has made their facilities available . The virtual school are providing bespoke packages for Children Looked After in support of foster carers

In Adult Social care staffing levels are up to 80% and all vulnerable people have been receiving contact based on level of need and risk. The provider market does have capacity and some additional care homes have been purchased in advance of a surge.

The biggest issue was the availability of **Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)** for care homes and home care providers. However, our first supply of PPE arrived today (Fri 27 Mar) and will be distributed to our priority services. We understand we will now be getting weekly re-supply.

In Public health our new consultant has arrived in Harrow to help DPH. Much needed extra capacity.....

Community Engagement

Our Covid-19 Support Line, which I mentioned in the last updated, has been taking calls and 50 enquiries were received today (26th March). The main questions were on:

- Hardship (Benefits & Business)
- Food delivery

The Support-Line details can now be found on our web-site by following the Coronavirus link.

And in other good news, our Community Hub started to operate today, albeit at a fairly limited level. The Hub, which will now rapidly develop, will support the most vulnerable residents in Harrow as part of the Governments' wider efforts to ensure the most

vulnerable to Coronavirus can stay safely isolated in their houses. To begin with we will provide food, where required, and general help and support.

The NHS is sending out a letter to all such vulnerable people asking if they can support themselves, giving practical advice and asking them to contact a central number if they need help. We will then receive details of those who say they need help. One hundred and sixty five Harrow residents were on the first list (received today). Of these, 97 had asked for food support. We will be providing this support in conjunction with the voluntary sector over the weekend. We expect a larger number of residents to ask for support on Monday (there could be up to 5000). Food supplies from the Government will be received into our warehouse this weekend and the first direct delivery of food from supermarkets to vulnerable people's front-doors is expected next week.

Our People

Most of our people continue to work from home (and have slowly been getting used to this, for most, new way of working). The IT Help Desk had a major problem this week when due to a large number of absences and a much higher number of calls. Measures have been put in place to get things back on track.

On Tuesday next week the Chief Executive will address all of the Council through a conference call. He will be outlining the current situation, our response and how we all need to pull together. He will also be thanking all those who are putting in such hard work to ensure we care for our residents.

Stay safe and look after each other (and the NHS and Social Services ...)

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Where to find the latest information and guidance

- › Latest information on coronavirus: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- › NHS information on coronavirus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- › Q&A from Public Health England on coronavirus:
<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/01/23/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-what-you-need-to-know/>

Some additional links which you may find useful are:

- Public Health England's guidance about coronavirus (COVID-19) for health professionals and other organisations:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
- Residential care, supported living and home care guidance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-residential-care-supported-living-and-home-care-guidance>
- Guidance for educational settings:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>
- The latest travel advice can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Twitter:
<https://twitter.com/mhclg>