

Councillor Forward Leader's weekly video update script 07.05.2020

Hi, it's Councillor Kim Forward the leader of your council here again with my weekly video update on council news and services. Thanks for listening. I hope you are all managing to stay safe and well and thank you to all those providing us with what we need at this difficult time. This is just a quick update on council services, a bit about the council's finances and how we are continuing to support you -our residents and our businesses.

As you may have seen the government have given local authorities some additional funding to help cope with the impact of COVID-19 and our share of the £1.6bn was just over £900k. As welcome as the money is unfortunately it doesn't meet the additional costs and the loss of income that the council is experiencing as a result of COVID-19. Our current estimates are that this will be between £2.8 and £6.2m.

We provide many key services such as waste collection, street cleaning, upkeep of parks, housing services and temporary accommodation, planning and environmental health and there is increasing pressure in all these areas. We need fair funding for our town from the government and will continue to call for this at the highest level. Our top priority is supporting our residents and we need to be properly funded in order to do this.

Please remember the community hub service set up in partnership with others is here if you need it. For urgent support call 01424 451019 or if it's not urgent, you can fill out the online form which is on our website along with opening times, and more information about the organisations we're working with.

We restarted our garden waste service last week and now I am pleased to say that our bulky waste collections are back. Thanks for your patience waiting for this service to be resumed and we know it may have caused some people difficulty. You can book a collection on my.hastings.gov.uk. where you'll find all the latest information about our services.

We are helping to support businesses during this Covid-19 pandemic and our officers are working really hard to give out the grants to all those who are eligible. We have processed 1432 applications so far and given out £16.75m worth of grants. We are concerned that some businesses who qualify still haven't submitted their information; all the details are on our website so please check if you're eligible, and if you are you just have to fill out an online form to claim. We are still waiting for more information about

a discretionary fund announced by the government which should provide some funding to those businesses who aren't eligible for the other grants. Once we know the details we will let you know.

It was great to see the Hastings spirit alive and well online this past weekend, with a very successful virtual Jack in the Green event. Thanks to those who are working so hard to keep the community together during a time when we are all advised to stay at home. There's a Bank Holiday on Friday to commemorate VE day and we'll be sharing resources on social media if you would like to be involved.

I know we are all missing contact with loved ones and that this is a tough time but please continue to **stay home** and **stay safe**.

.