

Cllr Forward Vlog 24.09.20

Hi, it's Kim here, with your update from Hastings Borough Council.

Earlier this week, with cases of the corona virus rising both nationally and across Europe, our country's alert level was increased to 4 by the government and new measures to tackle the spread of Covid-19 were announced. These are likely to remain in place for the next six months.

The measures include a return to encouraging people to work from home if they can, reducing exemptions for the 'rule of six' and expanding the places in which face coverings are required. Some businesses must now close at 10pm and some Covid-19 related guidance for them has become law. There will be higher fines for breaking the rules and guidelines.

There were also new laws and financial support arrangements publicised regarding self-isolation.

The implications of all these new rules are complex, and we are unfortunately in a position again where the announcements were made before we at the council had any detail of how they are intended to work. We hear about the changes at the same time as everyone else across the country.

As we find out more from the government, we will make sure we update our website and social media feeds and include the information in our weekly newsletter, which you can subscribe to on our website. We are doing all we can to prepare to implement and manage these new measures with the information we have.

Yesterday the official NHS COVID-19 app was launched and anything that can help stop the spread of the virus is welcome so please download it to your phone if you can.

The law says that certain businesses must have QR codes available to scan for NHS track and trace at their premises and those that don't comply will face significant fines. Hospitality venues such as pubs and restaurants as well as libraries and museums and close contact services such as hairdressers and services provided in community centres and village halls are all required to display QR codes.

We've got ours up where we must, and I am sure that our businesses across the town are putting theirs up too.

Although everything seems to be COVID-19 related now we do have some exciting work going on at the council too.

We are working on Solar Together Sussex with iChoosr and other local councils. This scheme aims to help cut residents' carbon emissions and save them money on energy bills by using a group buying approach to secure significant savings on high quality solar panel installations. You can go to our website to find more details and register.

We are expecting to hear any day about the outcome of the Get Britain Building accelerated towns fund bid. Four great projects were submitted:

the restoration of the courtyard space at The Source Park into a new market style shop and food and drink arcade;

a new employment, events and advice hub at the college's station plaza building;

installation of more electric vehicle charging points in the town

and a new retail, training and outdoor space at 'Hastings Commons' in the lower alley behind Claremont.

We welcome the news that Historic England have awarded Hastings £2m from its High Streets Fund. Well done to The Heart of Hastings Community Land Trust who submitted the bid for the Trinity Triangle area. We were pleased to be able to support them.

This money will help to bring empty and run-down historic buildings back to life to provide housing, workspaces, a gallery and shops that are affordable for residents and business owners. This is a community-led scheme that will provide local people with the opportunities to learn new skills and find out more about the history of the area.

The last piece of news for this week is that the Foreshore Trust's new Large Grant Programme is open. It will fund community organisations in Hastings and St Leonards to deliver to its priorities over a three-year period. You can find more details on our website.

I know that we are all finding the new guidance changes confusing, but I also know that we will all be doing our best to follow them. One message remains clear, constant and very important: maintain social distancing, wash our hands regularly, and wear face coverings where necessary so let's keep doing that and help keep ourselves and others safe.

Until next time please stay safe and stay kind.

Thank you for listening.