

Cllr Kim Forward Script 28.09.20

Hello, I hope you are all safe and well. Some of the new measures the government announced last week to limit the spread of COVID-19 came in to force on Monday and are likely to be with us for the next six months. Examples of these are COVID-secure guidance for businesses becoming law and the law now stating that people must self-isolate when testing positive or being contacted by NHS test and trace.

The fines for breaching these laws are significant so please check the government website for the latest information. We know it is challenging trying to keep up with all the changes and understanding what they mean in practice.

We are continuing to work hard to understand the new guidance and legislation, so we are clear what they mean for us and what they mean for residents, businesses and employees. Our website will be kept up to date with useful information.

This week we had another reminder of the impact that Covid-19 continues to have with the closure of Hastings Academy. The school is being supported by Public Health England as well as the County Council as the local authority responsible for education. We have also been involved and stand ready to do whatever we can to assist. The education of our young people is so important, and they have already faced so much disruption this year.

It is good to see so many people in our town wearing face coverings to help protect others, but we have noticed that some of the disposable masks and other protective equipment is being dropped on our streets and open spaces. Please use the bins or take it home as this kind of litter can have a real impact on the environment, and particularly on marine life. Don't forget to let us know about any litter you see via our website.

October is Black History Month which is an opportunity for us to recognize and celebrate the outstanding contributions people of African and Caribbean descent have made to our country over many generations in all areas from business, law and education to technology, sport and the creative arts. Locally the St Leonards and Hastings Alliance for Diverse Ethnicities is planning a cultural trail 'celebrating the past and present of black people in Hastings and St Leonards'. The council will be changing the lights in bottle alley as part of its recognition and celebration and at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery the final two submissions from the Black Lives Matters artists responses will be on show.

Last Friday afternoon, just after I recorded my message, we heard that the Hastings Town Deal board's bid for £1million funding was successful so the projects I mentioned will go ahead. They are:

restoration of the courtyard space at the former White Rock Baths

a new employment, events and advice hub at the college

retail, training and outdoor space at 'Hastings Commons',

increased numbers of electric vehicle charging points in the seafront and town centre car parks.

The electric vehicle points will also be partially funded by the council, as part of our drive to tackle climate change.

This week we held a Town Deal and Local Plan focused Climate Change workshop, where we heard thoughts on possible new policies for the emerging local plan and about measures that could help deliver the town wide goal of reaching zero carbon emissions.

Finally, another reminder that the Foreshore Trust Large Grants programme which spans three years and is directed towards local voluntary and community organisations has been launched...there's more information on our website.

Until next week let's keep working to stop the spread of this virus by social distancing, wearing a mask and washing our hands. It is hard to keep our distance from others, but it is the most effective way of ensuring that those you care about stay safe.

Thanks for listening, have a good week.