

## **Cllr Kim Forward Weekly Video Update Transcript 22.05.20**

Hi, it's Kim here again the leader of your council, with my weekly video update on council news and services.

This week at the council we've been looking back at everything that has been done over the past few weeks to keep our services going since the COVID-19 crisis first began. We are really grateful to you, our residents for being so patient whilst there were, and in some cases still are, some service disruptions. Our council managed to adapt quickly to the new situation and I am pleased that we have been successful in minimising the impact to our services.

We will be back to holding regular committee meetings, which will of course be virtual meetings, starting next week and you will be able to join us and view them live. We'll publish the link for joining on our website and social media channels.

We are still working with other local councils in East Sussex on our discretionary funding scheme for businesses. If, based on the government guidance you believe you may be eligible, you can register your interest on a form on our new webpage. This will assist us in assessing the number of businesses looking for support under this funding scheme and it will help us to contact you when the scheme has been agreed.

I am calling out to those businesses that may be eligible for the existing grants who haven't applied yet to please go to our website and check.

As always, the community hub is still here to help you. For urgent support please call 0 1 4 2 4 4 5 1 0 1 9, or for less urgent requests complete the online form.

The issue of poverty in our town has been exacerbated by the Coronavirus pandemic and I am very grateful to all of you who are supporting our local organisations which are providing food and basic supplies to people and their families. Recently published statistics from the End Child Poverty coalition show that child poverty in Hastings had increased dramatically even before the impact of Covid-19. Ending child poverty must be a top priority for any government and we must have adequate long term support based on our local need.

It is Mental Health Awareness Week this week and it is so important that we take care of our mental wellbeing during this difficult time and also offer support to others if we can. Just a text, a message or a phone call can make all the difference. The NHS' Every Mind Matters website has some great advice and resources.

If you're looking for something creative to do while staying safe at home, then why not join our museum's new project #HastingsDigitalQuilt. A painting of Hastings by Edward Badham is being divided into squares and people are invited to take a square and recreate it anyway they like. The museum will then work with artists to create a piece of community art. It sounds fun! Check out the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery Facebook page for more information and lots of other activities.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for helping to keep our infection rate one of the lowest in the country. The Government has told us that we need to decide locally what is right for us, so Hastings is still closed to visitors-they will be welcome again when the time is right. Our amenities remain closed including our playgrounds and toilets. Keeping people safe is our top priority. Please whenever you can continue to stay home and stay safe.

Thank you for listening.