

ESCC Report for Parish Councils July 2020

There are now 776 confirmed cases of coronavirus in East Sussex.

Restrictions to lock down are being eased as from July 4th. Pubs, restaurants and hairdressers can re-open as long as social distancing and hand washing measures are observed, members of two households can meet in two social bubbles, and for those who have shielded, groups of up to six people can meet outdoors as long as social distancing is observed. We are making slow progress.

As the lockdown measures ease ESCC have been considering future working arrangements. So far, staff who can work from home should continue to work from home with manager's agreement, and probably till September. In Adult Social Care and Children's Services, some staff teams providing an on-site service to the public need to come in to work at county hall or in the community.

Our Trading Standards Team has put together a new toolkit to inform and help businesses restart and recover.

Reminder: a webpage on the ESCC site brings together a range of information and advice about Covid/19 **Coronavirus-help and support.**

Residents' questionnaire on coronavirus East Sussex-Together-

The survey asks how coronavirus has affected people, and what people's priorities are for rebuilding and reshaping the country following the pandemic. Individuals, and Parish Councils, and community groups are being asked to complete the survey as a webchat, or on social media, ----it should take only 5 minutes.

https://webchat.novoville.com?name=east_sussex_county_council_coronavirus_response

In May 2020 the Secretary of State for Transport announced a £250m Emergency Active Travel Fund for local authorities to re start local transport as part of the government's recovery roadmap. This funding forms part of a wider £2bn announced in February 2020 to support the government's wider aim to get more people walking and cycling, and encouraging local authorities to develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP). The £250m is being released to local authorities in 2 tranches. Tranche 1 (ESCC expected £479,000) is for the delivery of targeted temporary transport measures that aim to encourage more walking and cycling for everyday journeys, supporting safe social distancing, and helping restart the local economy as the Covid/19 restrictions are eased. These measures might include road closures, widened foot paths, pop up cycle lanes , temporary cycle parking and social distancing signage. Advice was sought from district and borough councils and local walking and cycling groups. The tranche 1 funding will be available from the DfT at the beginning of July.

Schools were closed in March to stem the spread of the virus, despite children being the least susceptible to infection, apart from vulnerable children and those children of keyworkers who continued to attend school. Schools are now being encouraged to re-open to the wider school community, starting with reception, year 1 and year 6 Primary, and years 10 and 12 Secondary. Staff have instituted a one way system for drop off and pick up, hand washing stations, social distancing markings, and increased cleaning. Currently about 50% of children have returned who should have returned, and ALL children are expected back in September. Remote learning was planned for children during lock down but not all maintained schools have adhered to this and not all children have complied. It is essential that children return to school now for the sake of their education and their mental health.

As part of an East Sussex public health initiative to tackle loneliness and social isolation, 5000 colourful cards designed by school children have been sent to those who have been shielding and self-isolating during the pandemic. These have been sent via Community Hubs, food banks, and community and volunteer groups. Around 150 designs were submitted by pupils from 12 primary schools with winning designs chosen by councillors, chairmen, leaders and community hubs for each borough and district. Around 22,000 people in the county were shielded, 13,000 residents are registered with the hubs for support and more than 5000 people have been supported by community hubs.

The future of Rye Creative Arts Centre has been secured in a deal brokered by ESCC. This is the workplace of 30 local artists. Management has been transferred to a local firm who have agreed to run it as a community asset on a long term lease. The agreement with Martello Rye Creative Centre Limited means there is commitment to run the centre as a community arts centre, investing in the building infrastructure, to ensure it continues to provide community services including workshops and exhibitions. The Rye Creative Centre is very important to Rye residents.

Over the past months a reduced level of bus and community transport dial a ride provision has continued for residents and key workers. From 29th June more bus services will restart. These include most services by Compass Travel in the west of the county though some to limited time tables or running on fewer days of the week. Changes in relation to Stagecoach services in Hastings and Rother will also restart from 29th June but the situation is changing frequently.

Please check: www.eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/public/buses/bus-service-changes

At the moment older persons and disabled persons free travel bus passes are being accepted at all times. There is reduced capacity on buses due to social distancing.

On 6th July there will be structural bridge repairs to Bodiam Bridge on Main Street, expected to take 12 weeks. There will be Ewhurst carriageway patching for one day on 6th July.

Please note: Healthwatch East Sussex 03331014007 enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

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