

## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT September 2020**

### **Introduction to charges in some car parks to protect spaces**

With Civil Parking Enforcement introducing on-street parking charges in Bexhill, Rye and Battle from 29 September 2020 it is anticipated that the knock on impact will be increased use of some of our car parks.

To help cover the additional maintenance costs of increased use, and protect spaces for fair use by residents, businesses and visitors, we are proposing to introduce parking charges into a small number of car parks, and changing the charges in others to bring them more in-line across the district. This will affect a small number of parking areas close to streets that are affected by the on street charges and residents parking permits. The changes will help ensure fair availability of parking spaces and deter anti-social parking. The charges will contribute towards the increased maintenance cost without extra cost to the taxpayer.

This will be the first time that car park charges have changed since 2014; only one car park will see an increase, and Eversley Road car park will see a reduction. The De La Warr car park will remain the same. A communication strategy is in place and businesses that may be directly affected will be contacted . The changes will be timed to coincide as near as possible with the start of on-street parking charges from 29 September .

The following car parks will have charges introduced:

- Egerton Park
- Front of Town hall -weekend & Bank holidays only
- Galley Hill –foot
- Galley Hill –top
- Manor Gardens
- Polegrove - Richmond Rd
- War Memorial
- Rye Salts

### **Funding to reimburse council's loss of income**

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have announced they will partially reimburse councils for the loss of income from sales, fees and charges. An early estimate is that a grant of about £341,000 may be achieved. This is based on the first 5% loss being met by the Council and 75% being met by the grant. Not all income is covered, in particular, commercial rental income. In addition, the Government is not expected to cover losses caused by local decisions rather than the national restrictions.

### **Online advice and support for food businesses**

The Food Standards Agency has developed a new online campaign to provide advice for food businesses. [Here to Help](#) provides access to practical information, guidance, case studies, industry insight and webinars to help food businesses get back and stay on their feet following the challenges of COVID-19 and remain compliant with food hygiene and safety requirements. The campaign will be updated over the summer in response to the changing needs of food businesses.

### **Defra grant and food partnerships**

East Sussex County Council has received nearly £600,000 in grant funding from the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) to support those who are struggling to afford food due to the

virus. Plans for spending the grant have now been finalised and will address the immediate food security needs of our communities whilst also forming part of a broader programme of investment and strategic actions to address the impact of COVID-19 and support recovery from the pandemic. This will be done through:

- providing funding to East Sussex's 15 food banks based on need
- offering small grants to organisations that can either work with food bank users to address the cause of their food poverty or provide routes out of food bank usage
- reserving some funds that could be used for food box delivery in future
- supporting the development of local and emerging Food Partnerships to help them focus on building food security and sustainability in the longer term
- funding fuel vouchers to people in food poverty via Citizens Advice, and;
- supporting the promotion and communication of the grant programme.

Developing Food Partnerships in East Sussex will be valuable for outbreak planning and to help build security and sustainability in our food system in the longer term. This should help ensure that people have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and preferences, while promoting a healthy life and reducing the needs for foodbanks.