

District Council Report

Covid Update

Changes compared to the last lockdown:

- Waste and recycling centres will remain open.
- Outdoor playgrounds will remain open.
- Public toilets will remain open.
- Trades people can go into other people's homes, not just to respond to emergencies (as per guidance at present).
- All leisure Services with effect from 5th November will be closed.
- All other services will continue to operate largely as they have been over recent months either virtually or with strict social distancing in place.

Business Grants for closed business

Businesses required to close in England due to restrictions will be eligible for the Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSB):

- (a) For properties with a rateable value of £15k or under, grants to be £1,334 per four weeks.
- (b) For properties with a rateable value of between £15k-£51k grants to be £2,000 per four weeks.
- (c) For properties with a rateable value of £51k or over grants to be £3,000 per four weeks.

Additional Restrictions Grant for Businesses (ARG)

This will be distributed on the basis of £20 per head to enable councils to support businesses over the coming months more broadly including those businesses not required to close, but who are still impacted by the national lockdown. Further details and criteria are still to be confirmed.

Self-isolation support payments for low-income earners

Residents on low-incomes and unable to work because they have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, can now claim a £500 payment to compensate for loss of earnings if they meet the requirements of the scheme. Discretionary payments may also be available in exceptional circumstances to individuals who meet the main qualifying criteria (i.e. low-income and unable to work because they are self-isolating) but are not in receipt of qualifying benefits and are facing severe financial hardship.

Joint Local Plan

I have been part of the cross-party working group this year reviewing the Joint Local Plan. Together with officers we have reflected on feedback received from our communities following last year's consultation.

The finalised document will be presented to Council tomorrow and if approved will go through a final technical consultation, inviting comment on the legal compliance and soundness of the plan. The plan, along with these representations, will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate early in the New Year for examination.

The plan will shape our towns and villages until 2037, delivering housing, important infrastructure, and essential employment across the district.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Councillors are also set to consider a raft of measures this month, developed by a cross-party task force to improve the biodiversity in our district. The proposals have been developed following the extensive work of the task force, made up of councillors from all political parties. If agreed, the proposals will form the councils' first Biodiversity Action Plan, setting out how they aim to protect and strengthen biodiversity in the districts.

Leigh Jamieson (Cllr)