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Subject: Statement from Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Steptoe, and Managing Director, Shaun Scrutton 27.03.2020

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Updates from Rochford District Council

Car parking

The council has relaxed enforcement measures in all its council operated car parks until 1st May 2020. This means that residents can park without fear of receiving a ticket. However, residents are reminded to follow the Government's updated social distancing advice.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>

The council will continue to carry out crucial parking enforcement locally to ensure the public are kept safe and that car parks remain clear for emergency and essential services.

Stay at home, save lives

You should only leave the house for one of four reasons, and one of these is to provide care or to help a vulnerable person. Even when you are doing this, you need to do so safely. You should be minimising time spent outside of the home and ensuring you are 2 metres (6 feet) apart from anyone outside of your household. This guidance outlines how you can help and importantly, how to do this safely.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-how-to-help-safely>

As a reminder, the four reasons for leaving the house are:

- shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
- one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
- any medical need, including to donate blood, avoid or escape risk of injury or harm, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
- travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home.

The Government has also today made new regulations to strengthen enforcement powers in England in efforts to implement the new 'stay at home' measures. These powers <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/police-given-new-powers-and-support-to-respond-to-coronavirus> replace the Business Closure Premises Regulations introduced last week. The regulations give the police powers to enforce the stay at home policy as it relates to individuals, including powers to disperse gatherings, ensure parents are stopping children breaking the rules, issue fines and – where fines are not paid or individuals refuse to comply – impose unlimited court fines and arrests. The Secretary of State has made clear that construction sites have not been asked to close, so work can continue if it is done safely. Employers should ensure their workers on-site are able to follow the public health guidance. They should also consider responsible arrangements for ensuring their workers can travel in line with this advice e.g. staggering site hours to reduce public transport use during peak periods. These arrangements will be kept under constant review. The Government expects the clarification to have a positive impact on the supply chain e.g. Travis Perkins reopened its stores today. This week the Construction Leadership Council published additional guidance to facilitate responsible on-site construction. <http://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/news/site-operating-procedures-during-covid-19/>

Waste and recycling collection service

Our crews are working extremely hard to continue to empty your bins. However, some of our collection services have been affected because of reduced staffing levels. Some residents in Hawkwell did not have their compostable bins collected yesterday (Thursday 26 March) and residents who also have collections today may also experience some missed bins. The council has an additional collection crew on standby for Saturday to enable us to catch up.

If bins in your road were not emptied the advice is to leave your bin out and we will collect as soon as possible. Missed bins can be reported online

www.rochford.gov.uk/report

Please avoid putting out additional waste for collection. If every household puts out more waste than usual, the collection vehicles will fill up quicker. This could result in some households not having their waste collected, as well as placing additional strain on collection crews. The advice is to store your additional recycling within your home. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

Planned gas mains works in Rochford

In response to the COVID 19 crisis, Triio and Cadent will be postponing planned work and closing operations until further notice. In line with the Government's approach, they will review the situation in three weeks and take appropriate advice at that time. As soon as there is an update on resuming work, we will provide further updates.

Please follow the Triio webpage on the following link for updates and information. <http://triio.co.uk/rochford/>

Updates from Government

Business

Yesterday the Chancellor outlined his long-awaited scheme to support the UK's self-employed affected by COVID 19 – the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-gives-support-to-millions-of-self-employed-individuals>

The plans propose that those eligible receiving a cash grant worth 80% of their average monthly trading profit over the last three years up to £2500 pcm for 3 months. People who are eligible for the new scheme and will be able to apply directly to HMRC for the taxable grant, using a simple online form, with the cash being paid directly into people's bank accounts.

The scheme will be open to those with a trading profit of less than £50,000 in 2018-19 or an average trading profit of less than £50,000 from 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19. To qualify, more than half of their income in these periods must come from self-employment. To minimise fraud, only those who are already in self-employment and meet the above conditions will be eligible to apply. HMRC will identify eligible taxpayers and contact them directly with guidance on how to apply.

The income support scheme, which is being designed by HMRC from scratch, will cover the three months to May. Grants will be paid in a single lump sum instalment covering all 3 months and will start to be paid at the beginning of June.

Individuals should not contact HMRC now. HMRC will use existing information to check potential eligibility and invite applications once the scheme is operational.

Those who pay themselves a salary and dividends through their own company are not covered by the scheme but will be covered for their salary by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme if they are operating PAYE schemes.

Further information and details of the scheme will be shared shortly by HMRC. HMRC will use the average trading profits from tax returns in 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 to determine the size of the grant. This scheme also applies to members of partnerships. Before grant payments are made, the self-employed will still be able to access other available government support for those affected by coronavirus including more generous universal credit and business continuity loans where they have a business bank account.

Moving to a new house

This guidance applies to people buying or selling private residential homes which they intend to live in.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/government-advice-on-home-moving-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

NHS advice

Everyone is reminded to follow the NHS advice which includes preventative measures about social distancing and stay at home guidance. Please also remember to keep your hands clean, especially if you have been outside e.g. at the supermarket or using an ATM.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>

Please use our website!

Don't forget a lot of useful content is available via our website and this will be updated regularly, so www.rochford.gov.uk is the best place to check first and we have a dedicated section at www.rochford.gov.uk/coronavirus. Our other media channels are also good sources of information - www.rochford.gov.uk/tellmemore, also good sources of information - www.rochford.gov.uk/tellmemore, Facebook: [Rochford District Council](https://www.facebook.com/RochfordDistrictCouncil), Instagram [@RochfordDC](https://www.instagram.com/RochfordDC) and Twitter [@RochfordDC](https://twitter.com/RochfordDC)

We would like to reassure everyone that we are working closely with our partners from across Essex in the NHS, emergency services, county council and other local authorities, ensuring that well-practiced plans are put into place.

Daily updates

The council is monitoring Government guidance daily and will be issuing communications to staff, members and the public with increasing regularity but in the meantime, so please watch our website, sign up for e-mail alerts or go to our social media channels to keep up-to-date with the latest information.

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