

Local context

Covid support bubbles

The County Council has launched new webpages to support Hampshire residents to set up and maintain support bubbles and childcare bubbles, while helping to prevent the spread of Covid-19. The webpages contain important [guidance on who can create support and childcare bubbles](#), and how to do so, (including advice for parents with shared custody of children). For more information please see the [support bubbles webpages](#) and the [press release](#).

Financial impact of Covid-19 on the County Council

The County Council has published the [agenda pack](#) ahead of its Cabinet meeting next Tuesday (24 November). Cabinet will consider reports on the County Council's response to the Covid-19 crisis and a report of the Director of Corporate Resources providing a financial update and an update on budget setting and provisional cash limits 2021/22.

In a [press release](#), the Leader of the County Council, Councillor Keith Mans, is quoted: "Hampshire County Council's strong track record in managing its finances, has meant we have been able to cover the £39.7 million of unfunded costs and losses we have experienced so far this financial year as a result of the pandemic... Our Covid costs amount to around £210 million over the next three years, and we will continue to press the Government to fund the full financial consequences of the pandemic."

Active Travel Fund

Last Friday (13 November), the County Council [welcomed](#) the news that its bid for £3.28 million of funding from the Government's Active Travel Fund was successful. The funding from the Department for Transport follows a successful bid earlier in the year for £863,000 for temporary pop-up measures to support social distancing in town centres and high streets.

In a [press release](#), Councillor Rob Humby, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment at Hampshire County Council is quoted: "[the funding] will be used to deliver a range of transport schemes supporting attractive alternatives to the car for shorter journeys, and encouraging appropriate re-balancing of transport to support walking and cycling in particular."

Hythe Ferry

The County Council has joined with local authority partners, Southampton City Council and New Forest District Council, to secure a joint funding package worth £45,000 for the Hythe Ferry to compensate for financial losses due to falling passenger numbers during the Covid-19 pandemic. The amount is split equally between each partner authority; it will be administered by Hampshire County Council with a mechanism in place for the contribution to be directly spent on delivering the ferry service. For more information, please see the [press release](#).

Covid Winter Grant scheme

The Leader of Hampshire County Council, Councillor Keith Mans, has [welcomed](#) news that the Authority will receive £2.89 million of funding as part of Government's £170 million [winter funding package](#) to help support the most vulnerable children and families - including providing free meals to disadvantaged children during the Christmas holidays.

Accessing local Covid-19 data

There are a wide range of sources available to access Covid-19 data. The County Council [publishes](#) a weekly data dashboard which contains the latest county-wide figures. For those looking for district level data, and for more regular data updates, Public Health Hampshire recommend accessing the data available on the official [GOV.UK Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) in the UK](#) website – which is a reliable source for both national and local data.

On the Gov.uk website, local level data is published on cases and deaths and can be viewed and monitored at both a county and district level. Although there are many other sources available, the information is generally a reproduction of government data – therefore, accessing it direct from the Gov UK website will ensure that you have the most up to date figures.

To get the most out of the published material, the County Council has created a 'how to' guide – view it [online here](#).

Christmas events

The County Council has shared an interim position statement from Public Health Hampshire on Christmas and festive events with District/Borough Councils, which can be cascaded further to their local partners and event organisers. The statement recognises the challenges posed by the current uncertainty over what will happen over the festive period, particularly in terms of planning events, and outlines a short series of considerations for any event or activity that will help to limit exposure, regardless of any system or guidance which may be in place when current restrictions are eased, including:

- Large gatherings are strongly discouraged, but any events that do take place must adhere to the most relevant government guidance and with the awareness that an event may need to be cancelled at short notice as a result of any new government guidelines, laws or restrictions.
- Consideration must be given to the number of people expected and the ability to ensure Covid-secure measures are in place. Small, outdoor experiences are preferable, and efforts must be made to ensure social distancing, reduce mixing between different households and to reduce contact with shared surfaces. Where possible, alternative means of viewing events e.g. virtually, is also encouraged.
- Experiences which involve any close contact with workers, (including Santa and helpers), and shared surfaces, (such as bags of presents), are strongly discouraged.
- If high attendance and potential gathering (including queues) are expected then a full risk assessment is required in line with the COVID-19 checklist, which should include methods to control attendance, limit social interaction, enforce social distancing and support contact tracing through NHS Test and Trace.
- Where performances are planned (including carol singing, wind and brass bands in high streets), these should be in line with government guidance on performing arts

and include consideration of cumulative aerosol transmission from both those performing and attending, with audience participation from singing along strongly discouraged. In addition, mitigations should include limits on the number of performers, audience numbers and social interaction opportunities, ensuring social distancing and minimal interaction between households.

National context

Communities

Volunteering

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has [published](#) new guidance for people who run volunteer-involving organisations or groups, or manage volunteers, to aid them to safely and effectively involve volunteers during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has [updated](#) the guidance for those managing community centres, village halls and other community facilities on safely re-opening multi-purpose buildings in line with national restrictions.

House moves

MHCLG has [updated](#) the guidance for people moving home, as owner-occupiers, private or social renters. The Housing Market in England remains open during this period of national restrictions and the guidance aims to provide public health information to ensure that moving home and related activities, such as viewing properties, can happen safely.

Domestic abuse

The Government has [announced](#) additional funding to support victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence during the winter and into the new year as charities continue to report a steep increase in demand for services during the pandemic.

Children and education

School meals

The Government has [updated](#) the guidance for schools and councils on school meals arrangements during the Covid-19 outbreak. This includes information on the support available for clinically extremely vulnerable pupils who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals, the Covid Winter Grant Scheme and the expansion of the Holiday Activities and Food programme.

Children's social care services

The Department for Education has [updated](#) guidance for councils and their partners to help support and protect vulnerable children in line with national restrictions.

Adults' social care and public health

Ventilation

The Government has [released](#) a new short film to illustrate how Covid-19 lingers in enclosed spaces. People are advised to keep their homes well ventilated as research shows that being in a room with fresh air can reduce the risk of infection from particles by over 70%. The new film will run across social and digital advertising in England.

Moderna vaccine

The Government has [announced](#) that it has secured access to five million doses of Moderna's Covid-19 vaccine. If approved by the medicines regulator, the vaccine could be delivered to the UK from Spring 2021.

Lateral flow tests

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has [updated](#) the list of councils that will receive lateral flow tests via their directors of public health. These are rapid turnaround tests that can process Covid-19 samples on site without the need for laboratory equipment, with most generating results in under half an hour.

Geographical allocation of positive cases

On Monday (16 November), Public Health England (PHE) [published](#) a statement on the geographical allocation of positive Covid-19 cases. PHE confirmed they have updated the way they record the location of people who test to prioritise addresses given at point of testing, rather than details registered on the NHS database.

Priority postboxes

DHSC has [announced](#) that Royal Mail is introducing a weekend extension for over 15,000 priority postboxes from 21 November. Priority postboxes can be identified on the [Royal Mail website](#).

Diagnostic facilities

DHSC has [confirmed](#) the opening of two new 'megalabs' which will become operational in early 2021. Together, the labs (based in Leamington Spa and Scotland), will provide up to 600,000 additional daily testing capacity.

Care home visits

DHSC has [launched](#) a new pilot of regular testing for the family members or friends of those living in care homes. The pilot has started in around 20 care homes across **Hampshire**, Cornwall and Devon, and will be rolled out more widely in December.

Economy, business and finance

Green recovery

The Prime Minister today (18 November) [announced](#) plans for a green recovery in his [10 Point Plan](#). The plan aims to allow the UK to meet its environmental targets by 2050 and to help 'level up' the country. It covers areas including, electric vehicles, active transport, green energy, public transport, homes, finance and nature. In addition, the Financial Times today [published](#) a piece by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, which outlines his plans for a green recovery.

Seasonal poultry workers

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has [published](#) new guidance for seasonal poultry workers coming to England to process poultry on farms and their employers.

Support for small businesses

The Government has [announced](#) additional funding worth £2.2 billion for small businesses which will be administered by local authorities. There are two grant schemes: one for businesses that have had to close, and another scheme for further business support as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Environment, transport and travel

Travel corridors

On 14 November, the Government added Bahrain, Cambodia, Chile, Iceland, Laos, Qatar, UAE and Turks and Caicos Islands to the travel corridor list and removed Greece, except the islands of Corfu, Crete, Kos, Rhodes and Zakyntos.

National Covid-19 data

As of 4pm on 18 November, the total number of people tested positive for Covid-19 was **1,430,341** and daily number of lab-confirmed cases was **19,609**. The total number of Covid-19 associated deaths within 28 days of a positive test was **53,274**, with **529** deaths reported on the day. The data is available to [view online](#).

The R number range for the UK is **1.0-1.2** and the growth rate range is **+1% to +3%** per day as of 13 November.

Additional links

- Hampshire County Council webpages on coronavirus (including links to press releases): <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/coronavirus>
- Latest information on coronavirus: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- NHS information on coronavirus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- FAQ from the Cabinet Office: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do>
- PPE guidance hub: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-personal-protective-equipment-ppe>
- Guidance for local government: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-local-government>
- County Councils Network (CCN) coronavirus information pages: <https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/coronavirus-information-for-local-authorities/>
- Local Government Association (LGA) councillor guidance: <https://www.local.gov.uk/covid-19-outbreak-councillor-guidance>

Deborah Harkin
Assistant Chief Executive