



GUILDFORD  
B O R O U G H

**James Whiteman**  
Managing Director

[www.guildford.gov.uk](http://www.guildford.gov.uk)

Dear Councillor

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 2ND JUNE, 2020**

Please find attached the following:

**Agenda No    Item**

4.     **Response to COVID-19 (Pages 3 - 18)**

Yours sincerely

James Dearling  
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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 2 June 2020

## Covid 19 – GBC Emergency Response

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**James Whiteman**  
**Managing Director**  
**Guildford Borough Council**

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# Covid 19 – Impact

- 270,000 UK confirmed cases (positive tests)\*
- 38,000 UK confirmed deaths in all settings\*
- 2,900 Surrey confirmed cases\*
- 1,160 Surrey confirmed deaths\*
- Unprecedented restrictions on people's lives
- Massive economic implications (national and local)
- Huge implications for public and council finances
- New normal – dealing with the impact/grasping opportunities

(\*Rounded figures based on data from 26/27 May 2020)

# Timelines and Governance

- 29 Jan First confirmed Covid cases in UK
- 28 Feb Surrey Coordination Group established
- 1 Mar First confirmed death in the UK linked to the virus
- 3 Mar GBC Covid Group established
- 13 Mar GBC Homeless Task Group established
- 16 Mar UK deaths reach 55 – people urged to work from home
- 19 Mar Surrey declares an emergency
- 23 Mar Government announced lockdown commences
- 25 Mar Coronavirus Act 2020 received Royal Assent
- 9 April UK records highest daily death toll (948)
- 5 May Covid 19 Emergency Budget agreed by GBC
- 13 May First easing of lockdown measures announced

# Maintaining Essential Services

## Examples

- Refuse and recycling services
- Street cleansing services
- Grounds maintenance services
- Parks and countryside
- Meals on wheels and community transport to hospital
- Home care and repair services for vulnerable residents
- Housing advice and homelessness services
- Bereavement services
- Planning and building control services

# Suspension of Services

- Guildford Spectrum
- G Live
- Guildford Museum and Guildford House Gallery
- Tourist Information Centre
- Car parking charges and (most) enforcement
- Park and ride services (3 of 4 sites)
- Day centres and associated care services
- Housing repairs (except emergencies)
- Playgrounds

# Emergency Response/New Services

- Food parcels and prescriptions from welfare hubs
- Vulnerable persons helpline
- Welfare checks for shielded and vulnerable residents
- Extended meals on wheels service
- Business grants
- Virtual council and committee meetings
- Online guidance, advice and support (residents and business)
- Enhanced internal and external communications
- New large bin waste service



# Facts and Figures

(All figures correct as at 22 May 2020)

## Telephone Calls

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- 12,159 calls to our most vulnerable shielded residents (Cat A)
- 3,375 calls to other vulnerable residents (Cat B and C)
- 2,107 telephone calls to our vulnerable persons helpline
- 1,376 calls received by Housing Advice Services
- 114 calls from volunteers wanting to help

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# Facts and Figures

## Food, deliveries and support for the vulnerable

- 1,595 food parcel deliveries to our residents
- 1,978 food parcels delivered countywide from Guildford Spectrum
- 13,672 meals on wheels delivered
- 314 prescriptions collected and delivered to GBC residents
- 199 urgent minor home adaptations completed
- 54 homeless people placed in accommodation
- 87 staff redeployed to welfare hubs and services
- 46 donations to fund food parcels totalling £850

# Facts and Figures

## Communications

- 46,186 information leaflets hand delivered to households
- 58,290 page views on coronavirus section of the GBC website
- 84,684 engagements with social media activity

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## Business

- 59 commercial tenants' rent instalment dates moved
- 1,384 grants to local businesses totalling £18,570,000
- Business rate holiday to 984 properties totalling £40.9 million

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# Staff

- Frontline services maintained
- Large scale home-working facilitated by ICT (over 300 from Millmead)
- 87 staff redeployed (e.g. food parcels, welfare checks)
- No increase in sickness absence and low levels of Covid-19 symptoms
- Effective management of PPE for use by staff
- Operational staff now using Covid testing facilities in Guildford
- Mental health and support (EAP, Mindfulness etc.)
- Staff survey to be undertaken on experiences and support needs
- Most importantly – our people have been incredible!

# Finance

- Emergency budget agreed by Council on 5 May 2020
- £1.5 million Covid 19 emergency funding from government
- £1.9 million forecast full year expenditure by GBC
  - Guildford Spectrum (£1,257,000)
  - Homelessness (£309,000)
  - Food parcels and grants (£150,000)
  - G Live (£112,000)
- £9.6 million projected lost income by GBC
  - Car parking (£5,529,000)
  - Planning and development control (£855,000)
  - Sports and leisure (£419,000)
  - Commercial rents (£341,000)
  - Tourism (£238,000)
  - Other (trade waste etc.) (£1,835,000)

# Local Recovery

## Council Services and Financial Position

- Future Guildford to address budget shortfall
- Managing our finances (reduced income/increased spend)
- Resourcing our response to Covid 19 over a longer period.
- Ongoing redeployment of staff into priority areas.
- Phased resumption of normal essential services
- Review, reduction or removal of services
- New ways of working (homeworking and virtual meetings)
- Reviewing our strategic priorities

# Local Recovery

## Local Economy, Jobs and Skills

- Engage business to understand impact and needs
- Analyse parts of economy have been most severely impacted
- Assess the implications of a phased ending of the lockdown
- Work with EM3 and SCC to provide advice and support
- Liaise with Experience Guildford about town centre support
- Develop ideas to recover tourist and visitor footfall
- Use procurement to support local suppliers.
- Consider social value in contracts (e.g. apprenticeships)
- Manage rent payments by vulnerable GBC commercial tenants
- Public “buy local” campaign
- Supporting the unemployed back into work

# Local Recovery

## Vulnerable People, Voluntary and Community Sectors

- Effective liaison with the voluntary sector to understand the impact
- Continued support for most vulnerable
- Continued provision of accommodation for the homeless
- Re-assess priorities for grant funding under existing schemes
- Promote volunteering and encourage new community welfare groups
- Promote Guildford Community Lottery
- Refocus Guildford Philanthropy on work, training and skills projects
- Introduce new crowdfunding platform as new fundraising stream
- Mayor's Coronavirus Relief Fund



# GBC Heroes



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