

**BERA E-Newsletter 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020** - [www.bera.co.uk](http://www.bera.co.uk) (printable version of Newsletter is available soon on website if needed)

Dear Member

Please see today's update, along with other information that is happening in our area.

Please also continue to look at the BERA website for the daily updates under the 'newsletters' section. We will endeavour to send out the next e-newsletter on Friday/Saturday.

Keep well,

Regards

Ron

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**

**7 July 2020**

### **Purpose**

This briefing is to update all our Councillors daily on the ongoing development and management of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the current situation in the UK, and some key wider public health responses, mainly from a national level.

### **Latest on Coronavirus**

- Risk Level – 3
- UK Tests and Deaths: **a total of 286,349 (2,073 since 3<sup>rd</sup> July) were confirmed positive**. There has been a total of **44,391 (260 since 3<sup>rd</sup> July) COVID-19 related deaths**.
- In Southend-on-Sea there were **651 positive cases (10 new cases – Pillar 1 = 8 cases and Pillar 2 = 2 cases since the 3<sup>rd</sup> July)**.

**Pillar 1 (total 468)** - tests carried out in NHS laboratories; **Pillar 2 (total 183)** - testing by commercial partners of the mass-testing programme.

- There were **183 confirmed deaths (5 new registered death since 3<sup>rd</sup> July)** in both the hospital and community.

## Local Updates

**Test, Trace, Contain and Enable** - Our Health Protection Board met for the third time today (weekly meeting) and we are developing our surveillance report (how we look at all the data and information and gauge how we respond).

We have also agreed to develop a dedicated section of the coronavirus website at the Council to start adding the information that I provide in this twice weekly report and other useful data/information, following the feedback from our recent engagements. Once this is completed and running, I will stop issuing these reports and we will update the site ideally daily.

**Hospital Appointments and Preventing the spread of coronavirus** – I have reviewed the national guidance and discussed this with our NHS colleagues. For people scheduled for a surgical operation, they will have to ensure that they self-isolate for 14 days before their surgery day. For all other hospital appointments, it is expected that a risk assessment will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis and the decision shared with the patient. I have explored the issue of consistency in assessing patient for covid-19 risk and have agreed that we must ensure a Standard Operating Procedure is put in place to minimise inequality of access. NHS colleagues have confirmed that they will review this now.

**PLEASE NOTE:** On the 2<sup>nd</sup> July, the total number of positives cases were revised across the UK with an estimated 28,000 cases seen as duplicates or otherwise. On our PH reporting last Friday, we adjusted these figures downwards. Hence the reduction from Tuesday's (30<sup>th</sup> June) reporting of 312,654 to 284,276 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

### Key updates/actions

- **Visit Southend Safely:**

With the wider reopening of the leisure and hospitality industry at the weekend, a campaign encouraging people to Visit Southend Safely continues. More here:

<https://www.southend.gov.uk/news/article/1960/please-visit-southend-safely> and <https://www.southend.gov.uk/news/article/1962/patience-urged-as-pubs-reopen>

- **Play areas:**

Play areas will start to reopen tomorrow. More info and further updates will be placed here: <https://www.southend.gov.uk/playgrounds>

- **Discretionary business grant scheme:**

Small and micro businesses are being encouraged to check their eligibility and apply online at [www.southend.gov.uk/businessgrants](http://www.southend.gov.uk/businessgrants) We have received 294 applications, with 95 of those requiring further information. We have paid out £89,000 to 31 businesses. Businesses are being asked to apply as soon as possible and attach all relevant documents to their applications.

- **Retail, hospitality and leisure and small business grants:**

We have now paid out £36.6m to 3005 businesses.

- **Playgrounds:**

Six play areas will re-open tomorrow in our five Green Flag parks. More info here: <https://www.southend.gov.uk/playgrounds>

### Other

- **Out of hours:** Urgent issues arising out of hours should be reported to the out of hours service in accordance with standard practice. The phone number is 01702 215000. The out of hours service will then contact the relevant Council officer who is on-call or the relevant contractor such as Veolia. They also have access to the town link radio and CCTV.
- Please continue to visit and promote [www.southend.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.southend.gov.uk/coronavirus) to local people.
- Please encourage local people to sign up for [regular e-newsletters on Coronavirus:](#)

Please follow our social media accounts and share our Coronavirus related content.

### **COVID-19 Briefing - A Plan for Jobs**

Please see attached a summary of the full measures announced by the Chancellor today in response to governments [Plan to Support Jobs](#).

Some of the measures include:

- A new £2bn scheme to create new job placements for young people
- A temporary change to stamp duty - immediately increasing the threshold to £500,000
- Temporary cut to VAT on food, accommodation and attractions from 20% to 5%
- A new job retention bonus for employers who bring back furloughed staff
- A £2bn Green Homes Grant to help make homes more energy efficient
- “Eat out to help out” vouchers that will give diners 50% off their meals out, with conditions, for August

## Summary of the Govt. Announcements, 8 July 2020

Further to the previous briefing on governments Plan for Jobs, additional detail has been released:

- The Kickstart Scheme will support 16-24yr olds who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. Funding available for each job will cover 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus the associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions.
- The new payment of £2,000 to employers in England for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and a £1,500 payment for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, from 1st August 2020 to 31st January 2021. These payments will be in addition to the existing £1,000 payment the government already provides for new 16-18 year-old apprentices, and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan – where that applies.
- £101 million for the 2020-21 academic year to give all 18-19 year olds in England the opportunity to study targeted high value Level 2 and 3 courses when there are not employment opportunities available to them.
- The Government will expand and increase the intensive support offered by DWP in Great Britain to young jobseekers, to include all those aged 18-24 in the Intensive Work Search group in Universal Credit.
- The Government will increase the funding for the Flexible Support Fund by £150 million in Great Britain, including to increase the capacity of the Rapid Response Service. It will also provide local support to claimants by removing barriers to work such as travel expenses for attending interviews.
- The Eat Out to Help Out scheme can be used unlimited times and will include on non-alcoholic drinks. Detailed guidance on scheme, and registration details for restaurants and establishments will be published tomorrow (09 July).

New guidance has been published on [how public health officers apply Schedule 21 to the Coronavirus Act 2020](#), in particular, powers in regard to potentially infectious people

[Guidance for FE colleges and providers has been updated](#) on what they will need to do from the start of the 2020 autumn term

[School clubs in a local lockdown](#)

The guidance on what schools, colleges, nurseries, childminders, early years and other educational settings in Leicester and the affected parts of Leicestershire need to do during the local lockdown has been updated to confirm the circumstances in which holiday, after school clubs, and other out of school settings, can operate.

## **1) Information Corner**

### **Possible Scams**

We have been contacted by members advising us of possible scams. Please see below:

#### **a) TV Licence**

A member has recently contacted us and advised us that she received a scam email about her TV licence on the 4<sup>th</sup> July, so they are still sending out emails. Please be aware and do not open anything you do not know and delete it.

#### **b) Text sent to a mobile phone**

Today (8<sup>th</sup>) on my new mobile phone I received a text. No name just the following...

I hope you are well... It is incredibly important to me that you have access to your banking 24/7 in these uncertain times.

I am therefore sending you the link to our mobile banking app and would ask that you register asap, there are many features on the mobile app that you cannot access on line, etc etc etc. With several links to touch on your screen.

I have looked up the number +447557541709 and on the internet it says it's registered in China, even though it has a country code 44 prefix.!

#### **c) Amazon**

I have logged onto my Amazon account and all seemed normal, so possibly another scam to get me to log on. Clever to state that it's safe to use the link in the mail when the mail itself maybe a scam!

----- Original Message -----

From: Amazon <account-update@amazon.com>

To:

Date: 04 July 2020 at 15:31

Subject: Amazon security alert: Sign-in from new device detected

Amazon Logo Image

Sign-in from new device detected

We detected a sign-in to your account from a new device.

When: Jul 04, 2020 03:31 PM British Summer Time

Device: Mozilla Firefox Windows (Desktop)

Near: Waltham Forest, United Kingdom

If this was you, you can disregard this message.

Otherwise, please let us know.

Is it safe to follow this link?

The link provided in this email starts with "https://www.amazon.co.uk". If you prefer, copy the following link and paste it into a browser to view.

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/a/c/r?k=1b6286267a8242a28cbf30674cb08738-1f3b>

### **Be part of the pick - The Great British September Clean - 11-27 September 2020**

Keep Britain Tidy are thrilled to launch the Great British September Clean today, after the Great British Spring Clean was cancelled due to Covid-19.

Now they are calling on you - our #LitterHeroes - to be part of the pick and do your bit to care for the environment on your doorstep, as we join forces to collect and safely dispose of litter from our country's streets, parks and beaches.

So join them, as we stand together and declare that litter – which degrades the beauty of our environment and threatens to harm wildlife – is not acceptable.

There's two ways you can get involved and show support for our Great British September Clean:

1. [Organise a private group clean-up](#) with up to five family & friends.
2. [Pledge to do your own individual clean-up](#), you can give as little as 15 minutes to the campaign. et ready for the Great British September Clean 11-27 September 2020. To join go to: <https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean>

### **Coronavirus: Pubs close again after punters test positive for Covid-19**

Three pubs which reopened for the first time since lockdown measures were imposed have had to close again after punters tested positive for coronavirus. The pubs in Burnham-on-Sea in Somerset, Batley in West Yorkshire and Alverstoke in Hampshire have alerted their patrons that they have had to shut again.

### **Beer takeaway plan at late-night venues a 'recipe for violence', ministers warned**

Ministers have been warned that plans to allow late-night pubs and bars to sell

takeaway alcohol will spark street violence, disorder and drunkenness. Senior politicians and policing chiefs have warned against plans in the Business and Planning Bill to relax licensing rules in an attempt to boost the hospitality sector.

### **Community safety patrols to be extended**

Further support for the council's community safety unit this summer is to be brought in.

Four staff from Stambridge, the council's security contractors, have already been providing weekend support to the council's community safety unit in recent weeks, funded through the agreed budget to provide additional winter and summer support in 2020/21.

The additional support of four more, making eight extra in total, will be primarily used to target later community safety unit shifts on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights up until the end of September, but will be flexible and also available to meet demands on other days and times.

They will be in place to provide a reassuring visual presence across the Borough, giving Essex Police and the council's community safety unit more time to focus on priority areas and work. They will liaise with Police on the town link radio system and via other community safety officers on duty and also through the council's out of hours call centre which operates 24/7.

In addition to the extra staff, the council will also be filling an operations coordinator role that will liaise directly with Essex Police, coordinating different community safety projects across the Borough.

If you need to report anti-social behaviour, please contact Essex Police on 101.

### **Coronavirus hotspots**

Source: <https://www.echo-news.co.uk/news/18568755.map-shows-coronavirus-hot-spots-south-essex/>

Potential coronavirus hotspots in south Essex can now be identified using a new online tool - with parts of Southend and Basildon deemed "at risk".

The Leverhulme Centre for Demographic Science dashboard is designed to add to the government's test and trace programme by highlighting which regions and local areas are most likely to suffer disproportionate infections and hospital demand if an outbreak occurs.

In Essex the risk of hospitalisations per 1,000 people is just 8.1 - in line with the average across the UK and broadly in line with neighbouring counties.

A number of areas in the south of the county are in the red though, indicating a risk of more than nine people per 1,000 needing care if there was an infection spike.

Several parts of Southend, including Westcliff and Thorpe Bay, are in the red meaning the risk is higher, but central Southend and other areas are deemed to be the least at risk.

The risk level in Basildon is also deemed to be low, but is in the red for parts of Lee Chapel and Langdon Hills.

In Basildon the rate varies from 6.6 people per 1,000 at risk of needing care in central areas, but 9.7 per 1,000 on the outskirts of the town.

Rochford is in the red, with 9.6 people per 1,000 needing care if a spike took place, as well as Castle Point which is sitting as high as 10.5 per 1,000 people in some areas.

It combines data about groups known to be especially vulnerable to Covid-19, using factors such as age, social deprivation, population density, ethnicity and hospital capacity.

Given the constantly evolving situation, it also allows users to adjust for changing infection rates and hospital resource levels.

The dashboard features a map down to a ward level showing the risk of hospitalisation per 1,000 people based on age and hospital capacity.

## 2) Southend NHW Crime Report - 29th June - 5th July 2020

Ward	Reference	Offence Type	Reported Date	Committed From	Street	Town	MO
Southchurch	42/95323/20	Theft if not classified elsewhere	29/06/2020 17:17	29/06/2020 16:30	southend on sea	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS REMOVED VICTIMS MOBILE PHONE WITHOUT PERMISSION.
Southchurch	42/95689/20	Theft or Unauthorised Taking of a Pedal Cycle	30/06/2020 08:26	28/06/2020 00:55	Southchurch Boulevard	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS ENTERED VICTIMS BACK GARDEN AND STOLEN A PEDAL CYCLE.
Southchurch	42/95923/20	Theft of a motor vehicle	30/06/2020 16:41	29/06/2020 18:00	Archer Avenue	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS BY MEANS UNKNOWN STOLEN THE VICTIMS FIAT DUCATO, INDEX AU08EBA.
Southchurch	42/96361/20	Interference with a motor vehicle	01/07/2020 09:35	30/06/2020 00:10	Hamstel Road	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS ATTEMPTED TO GAIN ENTRY TO THE VICTIMS FORD VAN BY



							MEANS OF FORCING THE BACK DOOR. NO ENTRY GAINED. DAMAGE TO REAR DOOR VALUED AT GBP400.00.
Southchurch	42/98122/20	Other criminal damage to a vehicle (Under £5,000)	03/07/2020 18:27	03/07/2020 00:00	Sherwood Way	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS SMASHED THE WINDSCREEN OF THE VICTIMS CAR WITH A BASEBALL BAT.
Thorpe	42/98040/20	Other criminal damage, other (Under £5,000)	04/07/2020 07:03	25/06/2020 21:00	Shaftesbury Avenue	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECTS UNKNOWN HAVE CLIMBED TREES AND TORE OFF BRANCHES CAUSING DAMAGE.
Thorpe	42/98608/20	Robbery (Personal) (Indictable)	04/07/2020 22:26	04/07/2020 22:26	Station Road	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECTS UNIDENTIFIED HAVE STOLEN THE VICTIMS BLACK XIAMO M365 ELECTRIC SCOOTER. WHEN THE VICTIM TRIED TO STOP THEM, HE HAS BEEN STRUCK TO THE HEAD BY A METAL IMPLEMENT CAUSING BRUISING AND SWELLING.
West Shoebury	42/99034/20	Robbery (Business) (Indictable)	05/07/2020 15:08	05/07/2020 00:00	Saxon Gardens	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECTS UNIDENTIFIED HAVE THREATENED TO BEAT THE DELIVERY DRIVER UNLESS HE HANDED OVER ALL THE FOOD ORDERS. FOOD ORDERS WERE THEN STOLEN.
West Shoebury	42/99039/20	Theft from a motor vehicle	05/07/2020 16:14	03/07/2020 18:30	St. Andrews Road	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS STOLEN THE EXHAUST FROM A RED TOYOTA PRIUS, BY UNKNOWN MEANS.

### 3) A127 Major Works Update

No change from last week.

**UK Power Networks (electric)** – are continuing with their utility diversionary works at The Bell junction to complete their cable jointing works. There are no requirements for lane closures this week.

### 4) Major Works on Other Routes

RIVIERA DRIVE 06/07/2020 27/07/2020 AZ007-1000865282 MAJOR 100645 Road Closure - Delays likely

THE BROADWAY 16/06/2020 06/07/2020 AZ007-1000877032 MAJOR 101831 Give and Take - Delays possible

ST AUGUSTINES AVENUE 29/06/2020 28/07/2020 AZ007-1000877033 MAJOR 101830 Multiway signals - Delays possible

THORPE BAY GARDENS 06/07/2020 28/08/2020 AZ007-1000877212 MAJOR 101849 Give and Take - Delays possible

ILFRACOMBE AVENUE 06/07/2020 20/07/2020 AZ007-1000923908 MAJOR 105962 Road Closure - Delays likely

PARGAT DRIVE 06/07/2020 03/08/2020 AZ007-1000929609 MAJOR 106413 Some carriageway incursion – Delays unlikely

EASTWOODBURY CRESCENT 13/05/2020 10/07/2020 AZ007-1000939425 MAJOR 107239 No carriageway incursion - Delays unlikely

WHITEHOUSE ROAD 11/05/2020 10/07/2020 AZ007-1000939429 MAJOR 107238 Multiway signals - Delays possible

STEPHENSON ROAD 17/06/2020 14/07/2020 AZ007-1000939474 MAJOR 107255 Some carriageway incursion – Delays unlikely

JOHNSTONE ROAD 16/06/2020 06/07/2020 AZ007-1000945874 MAJOR 107679 Some carriageway incursion – Delays unlikely

VICTORIA ROAD 01/07/2020 23/09/2020 AZ007-1000945953 MAJOR 107692 Road Closure - Delays likely

WOODGRANGE DRIVE 01/07/2020 20/07/2020 AZ007-1000945954 MAJOR  
107690 Road Closure - Delays likely

ALDRIN WAY 18/06/2020 10/07/2020 AZ007-1000951731 MAJOR 108081 Multiway  
signals - Delays possible

ELMSLEIGH DRIVE 19/06/2020 27/07/2020 AZ007-1000951732 MAJOR 108082  
Two way signals - delays possible

PRINCE AVENUE 20/01/2020 10/07/2020 EC300-34831068 MAJOR 103271 No  
carriageway incursion - Delays unlikely

PRINCE AVENUE 17/02/2020 10/07/2020 EC300-34831792 MAJOR 103673 No  
carriageway incursion - Delays unlikely

WESTERN APPROACHES 22/06/2020 05/08/2020 KG025-/SEFTTH/PN031M  
MAJOR 107603 Multiway signals - Delays possible

FLEMMING CRESCENT 17/06/2020 20/07/2020 KG025-/SEFTTH/PN090C MAJOR  
106339  
Some carriageway incursion – Delays unlikely

WOODLEIGH AVENUE 16/06/2020 16/07/2020 KG025-/SEFTTH/PN090F MAJOR  
106342 Give and Take - Delays possible

MILTON STREET 26/06/2020 06/07/2020 KG027-SE-FTTH-PN086-01 MAJOR  
105475 Road Closure - Delays likely

MALDON ROAD 10/06/2020 10/07/2020 KG027-SE-FTTH-PN086-02 MAJOR  
105710  
Some carriageway incursion – Delays unlikely

#### **5) List of Decisions Issued Week Ending 05/07/2020**

**APPLN. NO: 20/00463/FUL**

**Ward. Southchurch**

**Officer: Oliver Hart**

**FORM ROOF TERRACE OVER SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO GROUND  
FLOOR SHOP AT REAR WITH PERIMETER WALL AND PRIVACY SCREENING  
TO BOTH SIDES, INSTALL FRENCH DOORS ONTO ROOF TERRACE**

**225A HAMSTEL ROAD SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ESSEX**

**Decision: Refuse Permission**

**APPLN. NO: 20/00493/FULH**

**Ward. Southchurch**

**Officer: Kara Elliott**

**ERECT SINGLE STOREY SIDE/REAR EXTENSION WITH ROOF LANTERN AND  
ERECT NO 2 DETACHED OUTBUILDINGS TO REAR**

**33 ASHURST AVENUE SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ESSEX**

**Decision: Grant Conditional Permission**

**APPLN. NO: 20/00699/FULH**

**Ward. Southchurch**

**Officer: Julie Ramsey**

**EXTEND EXISTING DETACHED GARAGE TO FORM INTEGRATED GARAGE AND STORE ROOM, ERECT DETACHED OUTBUILDING TO REAR TO FORM HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION**

**5 ARCHER AVENUE SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ESSEX**

**Decision: Refuse Permission**

**APPLN. NO: 20/00779/FULH**

**Ward. Southchurch**

**Officer: Kara Elliott**

**ERECT SINGLE STOREY REAR AND SIDE EXTENSION**

**50 BURLESCOOMBE ROAD THORPE BAY ESSEX**

**Decision: Grant Conditional Permission**

**APPLN. NO: 20/00513/FULM**

**Ward. Thorpe**

**Officer: Robert Lilburn**

**ERECT NEW SPECTATOR STAND TO SPORTS PITCH**

**ALL WEATHER PITCH SOUTHCHURCH PARK SHAFTESBURY AVENUE**

**Decision: Grant Conditional Permission**

**APPLN. NO: 20/00711/FULH**

**Ward. West Shoebury**

**Officer: Julie Ramsey**

**ERECT SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION, EXTEND PORCH TO FRONT, CONVERT LOFTSPACE INTO HABITABLE ACCOMMODATION AND INSTALL ROOFLIGHTS TO ALL ELEVATIONS**

**23 CONNAUGHT GARDENS SHOEBURYNESSE SOUTHEND-ON-SEA**

**Decision: Grant Conditional Permission**

## **6) Governments Policy Watch**

### **COVID-19**

Covid 19 related government guidance is updated very frequently (and communicated via other channels), with all local authority related guidance updated here. Sub-categories include the following:

- Local government
- Business rates
- Business and retail
- Council tax
- Domestic abuse safe accommodation
- Housing

- Homelessness and rough sleeping services
- Planning and building safety
- Procurement
- Public health
- Pubs and restaurants
- Schools
- Social care

### **Prime Minister promises 'New Deal' for Britain**

The Prime Minister has announced a range of measures aimed to boost recovery in light of the impact of COVID-19. To support economic recovery and, in an attempt to support jobs, £5bn of capital investment projects will be brought forward. This investment will include:

- £1.5bn in 2020 for hospital maintenance, hospital building and improving A&E capacity.
- £100m in 2020 for 29 road network projects.
- £1bn+ to fund 50 projects in a school rebuilding programme
- £560m for repairs for schools and £200m for repairs to FE colleges
- £142m for digital upgrades for 100 courts. £83m for maintenance of prisons and youth offending facilities and £60m for temporary prison places
- £900m for 'shovel ready' local growth projects in England 2020-21.
- £96m to accelerate investment in towns and high streets through the 'Towns Fund'. All 101 towns selected for town deals will received 500-£1m to spend on improvement projects.

### **Further £500m funding to support local councils**

The Local Government Secretary has announced a package of support intended to 'ensure councils' financial sustainability for the future'. The government has also acknowledged that 'councils are best placed to decide how to meet pressures in their local area' and as such this funding has not been ringfenced.

- A new scheme will reimburse councils for lost income and allow council and business rates tax deficits to be repaid over 3 years instead of one.
- Where losses are more than 5% of a council's planned income from sales, fees and charges, the government will cover them for 75p in every pound lost.

### **Leicester in localised lockdown**

Leicester has become the first city in the UK to face a localised lockdown following a recent spike in coronavirus cases. As a result, stricter lockdown measures have been restored with the Health Secretary suggesting that the situation in Leicester will be reviewed again in two weeks. Residents have been advised to stay at home unless absolutely necessary and to observe the two-metre social distancing rule.

Other measures include:

- Non-essential shops that reopened on the 15/06 have again been closed and businesses including pubs and restaurants will not reopen on the 04/07.
- Schools are once again closed to all but vulnerable children and the children of key workers.
- All but essential travel to, from and within the city is discouraged

The government has promised that extra money will be sent to Leicester and Leicestershire council to support communications and provisions for those socially distancing.

### **Regular testing for care home staff and residents**

The government has announced that staff and residents in care homes for people over 65 and those with dementia will receive regular coronavirus testing. Staff will be tested on a weekly basis whilst residents will be tested every 28 days. This move to regular testing has been prompted following advice from the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (Sage) and evidence highlighting a high risk of Covid-19 in care homes. This follows a study that found people in UK care homes were more likely to die from Covid-19 than residents in care homes in any other European country except Spain.

### **Equalities and Diversity**

#### **Covid-19 mortality rate in relation to religion**

Data published by the Office of National Statistics (available [here](#)) showed that the mortality rate from Covid-19 was higher for Muslims, Jews, Hindus and Sikhs than the rate for Christians and those of no religion. Jewish deaths in the UK have more than doubled during the pandemic with the Board of Deputies of British Jews carrying out 811 funerals between March and May this year compared to 358 last year. The ONS said that the higher impact on these religious groups was 'partly because of the' different circumstances in which members of these groups are known to live, for example living in areas with higher levels of socio-economic deprivation'. Muslim males had the highest rates of deaths involving Covid-19 with 199 deaths per 100k men of all ages.

#### **Councils 'need culture change' to boost diversity**

Campaigners from the Black Lives Matter movement have said that councils need to change their culture if they want to encourage people of colour to stand in local elections. The LGA have responded to claims that most UK institutions were not set up for a diverse world and that a lack of inclusivity is therefore 'structural and systemic'. The LGA advise that as a member organisation they have been working with councils to increase diversity and inclusion and wanted to 'create a working environment which is attractive and supportive for people from all groups and backgrounds'. A BBC report cited figures from 2018 showing that 96% of councillors were white and 63% were male.

The LGA have a number of campaigns and recommended programmes designed to encourage diversity in Local Government including the 'Be a Councillor' campaign and the 21st century councillor research.

### **Planning and transport**

#### **PM promises 'biggest shake-up of planning since WW2'**

The Prime Minister has announced the government will launch a planning policy paper in July setting out a plan for a major reform of England's planning system. In addition, the government will also introduce a Local Recovery White Paper that will

be used to launch a 'National Infrastructure Plan and legislate for 'wider de-regulatory reforms'. It is likely these changes will be in place by September 2020. Planning measures include:

- Reform of the Use Classes Order to allow greater flexibility on types of commercial premises with 'total flexibility' for repurposing.
- More commercial buildings will be able to switch to residential use without a planning application.
- Builders will not need a planning application to demolish and rebuild vacant residential/commercial buildings if they are built as homes.
- Property owners will be able to build additional space above properties with fast track approval, subject to neighbour consultation.

Some groups have however expressed concerns with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) questioning whether these changes will lead to a prevalence of lower quality buildings. The President of RIBA welcomed the call for 'urgent action' but said 'it is hard to reconcile the commitment to quality with expanding a policy that has delivered low-quality, unsustainable and over-crowded homes across England.'

### **UK to trial electric scooters on roads**

The government has published details of a consultation outcome on the legalisation of rental e-scooters on roads. An urgent consultation in an attempt to deliver 'a green restart of local transport' is taking place with trials of rental e-scooters to be rolled out around the country. The government will need to amend existing regulations so that e-scooter users would not have to comply with motorcycle regulations that require eg, the wearing of motorcycle helmets.

The government proposals would allow for e-scooters to be used in the same road space as cycles and EAPCs and cycle lanes where possible. The Department for Transport confirmed that Middlesbrough and the Tees Valley will be the first region to begin the trial. E-scooters will be allowed to go no faster than 15.5mph and helmets will be recommended but are not compulsory. The rental scooters will likely cost £1 to unlock and between 15-25p extra per minute per ride.

## **Economy and Finance**

### **English councils face funding gap of £7.4bn**

The LGA has warned that councils in England are facing a £7.4bn funding gap as a result of loss of income caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The government has already given £3.2bn in funding to all English councils but the LGA said that between March and June councils had already incurred costs of £4.8bn. The chairman of the LGA said that 'Further funding and flexibilities are now urgent if councils are to have the certainty they need to avoid taking steps, such as in-year cuts to local services, to cope with funding shortfalls.'

## **Democracy**

### **Citizen's assembly handbook published**

Further to previous guidance shared by the SBC policy team, the Innovation in Democracy Programme has published a handbook for local authority officers and councillors interested in setting up a citizen's assembly in their area. The guidance is largely based on insights and reflections from three existing assemblies in Cambridge, Test Valley and Dudley. The programme's primary aims were to

increase the capability of local people to influence decisions in their communities, to increase trust between citizens and local authorities and to encourage great participation in local institutions. The handbook can be accessed here with case studies available here

### **Government promises ‘most generous devolution agenda in 70 years**

The Local Government and Regional Growth Minister, speaking at the Local Government Association’s conference, promised a focus on devolution saying that Covid-19 ‘underlined the reality that an over-centralised state is not and never will be best place to respond’ to local issues. The minister advised that discussions would continue next week ahead of the development of a ‘Devolution and Local Recovery’ white paper. At present there is no fixed view on the minimum population size for new unitary authorities but the government’s current position is that a population of 300k to 400k is a potential floor. The minister also said that whilst mayors are not the only model of devolution, he believes they are the best and that having an accountable leader running a combined authority bringing together multiple councils from a ‘sensible geography’ is desirable. It was also stated that devolution would only occur in areas that consent to the change.

## **Housing and Homelessness**

### **Investigation suggests councils illegally relocating homeless people**

A recent documentary and investigation has suggested that at least 60 councils have failed to comply with the legal requirement to notify other LAs when moving homeless people outside of their boroughs. The leader of Basildon Council said ‘we’ve had an entire primary school’s worth of children come into our borough from other boroughs. And 58% of the time we haven’t been notified when people have been moved into the borough’. As a result, he said, much of Basildon’s available housing stock is being used by London councils and Basildon council is finding it difficult to source local accommodation for its own at-risk residents. Guidance on homelessness states that households should be found accommodation within their local borough wherever practical. However, findings suggest that 28,000 households are moved out of their boroughs every year.

## **Culture, Travel and Tourism**

### **50 low risk countries exempt from England’s quarantine**

The Department for Transport (DFT) has confirmed that from 10th July, people arriving in England from 50 countries will not be required to quarantine. This would exclude people who have visited or transited through non-exempt countries in the two weeks before their arrival in the UK. From 4th July, the Foreign Office will also change advice that previously advised against ‘all but essential travel’ for a number of countries.

Countries will be labelled using an amber/green ‘traffic-light system’ based on their prevalence of Covid-19. The DFT advised that risk assessments had been conducted by the Joint Biosecurity Centre and Public Health England and that



countries rated amber, including France and Germany, would have reciprocal agreements in place for UK arrivals. This will likely be a boost to London Southend Airport with CEO Glyn Jones last month calling on the government to 'drop the sledgehammer that is quarantine and pick up the scalpel that is air bridges based on sensible risk assessments'.

### **£1.57bn emergency support package for culture announced**

The government have announced an emergency support package that aims to help protect the future of theatres, galleries and museums. The funding will be split with £880m in grants and £270m in repayable loans that the government have said will be offered on 'generous terms'. A further £100m will be reserved for national cultural institutions in England and the English Heritage trust with £33m going to Northern Ireland, £97m to Scotland and £59m to Wales. £120m will be allocated to restart construction on cultural infrastructure following the pandemic.

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is confident that the emergency package would protect the majority of jobs in the cultural sector but that 'not every job is going to be protected'. The industry has reacted positively to the news with Arts Council England and the Society of London Theatre and UL Theatre welcoming the support. Several theatre chief executives have stressed the urgency of distributing the emergency support advising that time is 'fast running out' to save a number of businesses.

### **Environment and Public Space**

#### **Prime Minister announces measures to protect 'natural infrastructure**

In addition to measures announced to boost the economy, the Prime Minister has committed to 'reforest Britain' by planting 75,000 acres of trees every year by 2025. £40m was also pledged to create 3000 jobs for 'Conservation Rangers' to boost local conservation projects with a further 2000 young people to be trained to protect local environments in their community. The aim of this funding is to 'safeguard the UK's natural carbon stores and wildlife habitats...which are central to capturing and removing CO2 from the atmosphere.

### **Extended Briefing on Children and Education**

#### **All children and young people in education by the start of autumn term**

Comprehensive guidance has been released to help England's schools prepare to reopen in the autumn term. This addresses:

#### **Public health advice to minimise coronavirus (COVID-19) risks**

- Risk assessments for schools to revisit and update.
- Protective measures – such as hygiene, engagement with NHS Test and Trace, distancing, isolating, and planning groupings.
- Guidance on the prevention of spread and infection response.

#### **School operations**

- School-provided transport should also consider the system of controls.

- The usual rules on school attendance will apply, and most of the school workforce will attend.
- Schools are advised against educational visits.
- Governing bodies have the flexibility to decide on school uniform.
- Extra-curricular provision should be considered.
- Action for schools and local authorities include - Communicating attendance expectations, identifying disengagement, using catch-up funding, and close partnership working.

### **Curriculum**

Key curriculum principles are to be met. Including 'Education is not optional'; it should be 'broad and ambitious; and 'remote education, where needed, is of high quality'. Knowledge gaps should be prioritised, aiming to return to normal curriculum content by summer 2021.

- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) – Outdoor learning is to be offered for all children. In nurseries, focus on prime areas of learning. In reception, assess and address language, early reading, and mathematics gaps.
- Key stages 1 and 2 - Prioritise identifying gaps and re-establish good progress in the essentials. The curriculum should teach a full range of subjects to the majority of pupils.
- Key stage 3 - The majority of pupils are taught a full range of subjects over the year. Gaps in English and maths may need to be addressed for year 7 pupils using the Key stage 2 curriculum.
- Key stages 4 and 5 – More likely to need extra support to catch up on missed content. Timetables may be less flexible given qualification requirements. Beyond exceptional individual circumstances, year 10 and 11 pupils are expected to continue their examination subjects.

### **Behaviour, and pastoral support**

- A £1bn package will resource school catch-up support. £650m of which is one-off grant funding to all state-funded schools, and £350m will fund a National Tutoring Programme.
- Guidance on effective interventions to support schools has been published by the Education Endowment foundation.
- Pupils may experience anxiety, stress or low mood – Particularly the most vulnerable. This should be supported by provision of pastoral and extra-curricular activities, drawing on external support where possible.
- Schools should set clear, reasonable and proportionate behaviour expectations.

### **Assessment and accountability**

- Routine Ofsted inspections will remain suspended for the autumn term.
- Statutory primary assessments will take place in summer 2021.
- The early years foundation stage profile, and all existing statutory key stage 1 and 2 assessments, should return in 2020 to 2021.
- The rollout of the reception baseline assessment has been postponed until September 2021.
- GCSEs and A levels will take place in summer 2021 with adaptations. Ofqual will launch a consultation on proposed adaptations.

- There will be opportunity for years 11 and 13 students to sit exams in the autumn.

### **Contingency planning for outbreaks**

- For self-isolating pupils, remote education plans should be in place.
- Schools need a contingency plan for the event of a localised outbreak, including capacity to offer immediate remote education.

#### Updated guidance for early years and childcare providers

Since 1 June, early years settings, including childminders, have been able to welcome back children of all ages. Guidance for these settings has been updated, with changes to the following areas.

- Primary schools are now invited to voluntarily adopt Early Years Foundation Stage reforms this year, ahead of statutory rollout in 2021-22.
- The rollout of the reception baseline assessment has been postponed until September 2021. Instead, schools are invited to take part as early adopters in the second half of the 2020 autumn term
- Providers are currently required to keep children in “bubbles” of 15 or less. However, changes to protective measures, effective from 20 July, remove this requirement but still require minimising mixing where possible.
- Guidance calls on providers to update risk assessments to reflect the current climate and ensure regular cleaning of settings and hand washing among children and staff.
- Support is outlined for staff with increased risk factors to COVID-19, as set out in the COVID-19: review of disparities in risks and outcomes report. Staff living with those who have increased risk can attend the workplace, and settings should continue to assess health and safety risks and consider how to meet equalities duties in the usual way.
- Controls and protective measures against COVID-19 are outlined, which are similar to guidance for all schools.
- Attendance guidance for vulnerable children has been removed since settings are open for all children from 1 August.
- Wraparound care such as before and after school clubs can operate from 4 July.

### **Guidance published for special schools and specialist settings**

Guidance has been published to support special schools, special post-16 institutions (SPIs) and other specialist education settings, such as hospital schools, to prepare for pupils’ return to education full time from the beginning of the autumn term.

Outside of guidance made for ‘all schools’, key areas this guidance covers includes:

- Risk assessments advised - Where not completed, education settings should contact parents and involve them in planning for their child’s return to their setting from September.
  - Temporary changes were made in May to SEND legislation as a result of the pandemic. Section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 was modified so that local authorities and health commissioners use ‘reasonable endeavours’ to secure or arrange the specified special educational/ health care provision in EHC plans.
  - Further national notices to modify the EHC duties will not be issued, but will instead consider whether flexibilities may be required locally to respond to outbreaks.
- School operations

- Workforce guidelines recognise that education often involves specific ratios and specific staff training, and that interventions or care often involve close contact to children and young people who may not be grouped together under the system of controls adopted by a setting. Interventions should be provided as normal, and staff will need to be particularly rigorous about hygiene.

- Where support staff capacity is available, settings may consider using this to support catch-up provision or targeted interventions.

Curriculum, behaviour and pastoral support

- Children and young people are not anticipated to repeat a year of educational provision as a consequence of the coronavirus outbreak. This also applies to those with EHC Plans. However, it may be appropriate for a child or young person to extend their current educational provision or have their EHC plan extended in some cases.

- The Whole School SEND consortium will be delivering training and 'how-tos' for on supporting pupils with SEND to return to their mainstream school.

- Adverse experiences, or lack of routines may cause disengagement, resulting in increased poor behaviour. Settings should work with those pupils who may struggle to engage and are at risk, including providing support for overcoming barriers and to help reintegration back into school life.

- Provision for children who have SEND may have been disrupted during partial school closure and may impact on their behaviour. Settings will need to work with local services (such as health and the local authority) to ensure the services and support are in place to ensure a smooth return to settings for pupils.

- Some children and young people with SEND (whether with EHC plans or on SEN support) will need specific help and preparation for the changes to routine that these measures will involve, so staff should plan to meet these needs, for example using social stories.

Guidance for contingency planning for outbreaks, Public health advice to minimise coronavirus (COVID-19) risks, Assessment and accountability align closely to guidance for all schools.

Autumn GCSE/A Level exams to be offered in all subjects

England's exams regulator, Ofqual, says a "full suite" of exams will be available for some students this Autumn. GCSE and A-level grades were awarded this summer based on teacher's assessments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ofqual said students would still be awarded calculated their grades this summer, "giving them the opportunity to move on to further study or employment, despite the cancellation of exams".

**The full suite of GCSE, AS and A-level exams will be for students or schools who appeal, believing something has gone wrong in their calculated results.**

Some Headteachers have expressed practicality concerns, as accommodating a full set of autumn exams alongside getting all pupils back to school in September will be a "huge challenge", which would be achieved whilst accommodating the risks of COVID-19.