

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Bulletin 69 - 11 December 2020

Service delivery

- Although numbers nationally have slightly increased, cases are down across the South West and in Gloucestershire, although the Gloucester City region is currently experiencing a spike in cases. The R rate across Gloucestershire is between 0.9 to 1.
- The government is reviewing tier allocations across the country every two weeks – we are expecting an announcement about the situation for Gloucestershire and other counties across the country, on (or just before) Thursday next week.
- There have been some concerns raised about gatherings outside schools across Gloucestershire – letters have gone out to early years and schools with advice and guidance and spot checks in Tewkesbury Borough have not raised any concerns.
- Vaccinations are beginning to be rolled out in NHS settings and care homes. Officers are aware that local councils could be asked to provide support for the vaccination effort – and some work has already begun in Tewkesbury to support parking arrangements for the Devereux Centre staff in Tewkesbury.
- There are approximately 20 rough sleepers across Gloucestershire – the housing team is currently helping two of them from Tewkesbury Borough. A decision was taken by CEOs across Gloucestershire to, from January, step down the block-purchase of hotel provision. Anyone currently in hotels will need to be rehoused after Christmas.
- The environmental health team (EHOs) and Covid community protection officers (CPOs) have discovered an issue with noncompliance in hairdressers and barbers following spot checks across the borough. Six warnings have been given and one fixed penalty notice has been issued.
- EHOs and CPOs will be working with police to do some evening visits over the weekend.
- Council tax reduction awards to residents on low income have passed 3,000 – this is indicative of the financial impact the pandemic is having on local people.
- Ubico is gearing up for new Christmas collection arrangements this year. A press release will be issued shortly to highlight the changes.

Community

- The 100th community emergency grant has been paid to a project dedicated to supporting families during the pandemic. More information here:

<https://www.tewkesbury.gov.uk/news/100thcommunity-grant-provides-festive-cheer>

- The number of contacts being made through the Gloucestershire Help Hub continue to be low. Over Christmas, cover will be provided centrally by GCC.
- Food vouchers will be made available over the Christmas holidays for families who are entitled to free school meals. More details about the campaign can be found here: <http://orlo.uk/H4OQV>
- The communications team has organised some Covid-safety and shop local advertising to air on digital radio and Spotify. The advert went live on Wednesday lunchtime and will continue for 12 weeks with the option to change the messaging at four-week intervals.
- The use of the red and white barriers will continue in Tewkesbury town to enable social distancing on the busy high street. It will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

Business

- Grant payments update:
 - National Restrictions Grant – Received 426, Paid 365, Refused 55
 - Additional Restrictions Grant – Received 88, Paid 57, Refused 10
 - Self-isolation payments – Received 86, Paid 47, Not eligible 35
- There are three new grants available to businesses to support them through the new Tier restrictions. Details can be found here: <https://covid19.tewkesbury.gov.uk/covid19-business-grants>