

Tewkesbury Borough Council

Bulletin 95 – 11 February 2022

Situation report

- The South West currently has the second highest case rate in the country, with a rate per 100,000 of 1,027.2.
- In Gloucestershire, there are 7,386 cases. The rate per 100,000 is 1,152.9.
- In Tewkesbury Borough, cases have been consistently increasing since the start of the year. There are currently 1,246 cases. The rate per 100,000 is 1,289.5.

Service delivery

Housing:

- The team has been preparing the county-wide Rough Sleepers Initiative funding bid for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Communications:

- A press release was issued at the start of February to promote the [Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund](#) - a new support grant for businesses operating from business-rated premises.
- The Test and Trace Support Fund continues to be promoted across our social media channels.

Community and Economic Development

Community Help Hub:

- As of this week, the hub has officially closed due to decreased demand across the county.

Household Support Grant – food and fuel support for vulnerable residents:

- Letters have been sent to households in Bands A and B on Council Tax support. These households will receive either £20 supermarket vouchers for individuals and couples, or £40 supermarket vouchers for families.
- Supermarket vouchers will also be offered to residents eligible for Test and Trace payments and those receiving housing advice.
- Support is also being provided from Tewkesbury Foodbank (food and fuel vouchers), Hungry No More foodbank (food parcels) and the Citizen's Advice Bureau (food and fuel vouchers). Residents need to be referred to these schemes via a referral agency e.g. a GP, health visitor or the police.
- Further, wider support can be provided by [Gloucestershire County Council](#).

On Your Mind app:

- The [On Your Mind app](#) has been launched to help young people access mental health support.

Welcome Back Fund:

- Promotional work to support a safe return to high-street shopping continues. The campaign - which focuses on a new brand incorporating the slogan 'Re-discover Local' - includes regular social media posts, publicity films, and promotional literature and handouts.
- Other work includes events/markets, deep cleans of the three retail centres in Tewkesbury, Bishop's Cleeve and Winchcombe, and training for businesses.
- The fund is to be spent by the end of March 2022.

Growth Hub:

- Two of the Growth Hub's incubator units – which provide office space to local businesses - have been leased.

- The number of people calling into the hub to receive business advice and support continues to increase.
- Attendees of Growth Hub events continue to provide very positive feedback.

Revenues and Benefits

- The closing date for applications to the Council Tax Hardship fund has been extended to 20 February 2022. This is to enable us to assist even more residents experiencing exceptional financial hardship.
- The team is currently waiting on guidance from the government which will allow us to plan the delivery of the Council Tax Energy Bills rebate.

Business

- The Business Cell continues to receive a high number of applications for Test and Trace self-isolation payments from residents on a low income who are required to self-isolate.
- The Covid-19 Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant, which provides grant support to hospitality, leisure and accommodation businesses, remains open for applications until 18 March 2022.
- The Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund, which provides business rate relief to businesses that have been unable to access previous Covid-19 business-rate relief schemes, is open to applications until 25 February 2022. This support is aimed at businesses that have been adversely affected by the pandemic and have been unable to adequately adapt to the impact.