

Message of support to Cambridge residents on the united response to the Coronavirus epidemic from city political representatives of all parties

Monday 23rd March 2020

Dear resident

We are writing to thank you for all you are doing to support each other in our communities through such difficult times, and to protect your loved ones.

We also want to update you on what we are doing for you as your Councillors and local MPs for Cambridge - united together in action to tackle the Coronavirus epidemic, ongoing actions to increase public safety and to support those in our city most at risk. We couldn't be prouder of Cambridge than we have been this week.

Together, we need to help the most vulnerable in our city and, as your local representatives, we are determined to support the acts of compassion and kindness being already displayed through Mutual Aid groups being organised in all communities. We will work with them, and with all of you, to make sure that those who need help can get that help. And we will also do everything we can to give a voice to Cambridge residents and businesses, their staff and the self-employed in getting a fair assistance deal from the Government.

This is a big job that will need us all to work together. All levels of local government are working hard to keep essential services going and prioritise vulnerable people and public health at a time when many of our own staff need to self-isolate. Council staff are working tirelessly to make sure we keep key services running – and we thank them all for their dedication, skill and commitment.

Major City Council service changes, which will also appear in the local media, are at: www.cambridge.gov.uk/updates/2020/03/18/coronavirus-changes-to-our-services.

We are especially focusing on the following areas, working also with local groups where it's the right thing to do:

- Helping make sure people who need food and supplies the most don't miss out*
- Maintaining city hygiene, including refuse collection and street cleaning*
- Continuing with urgent repairs to our housing and other urgent priorities*
- Supporting our most vulnerable residents, including the homeless and those who need particular care.*

Events and responses are moving fast, and councils will inevitably need to make more changes to how services operate. Councillors are putting aside party affiliation and working in a collective and collegiate spirit to ensure council officers and staff have the powers and support they need to implement temporary, but essential public

health changes and actions to protect and support people.

We are working in tandem with County Council leader Councillor Steve Count, city County Councillors and senior County Council officers, supporting their critically important public health and social care delivery, so the most vulnerable and elderly in Cambridge are shielded. We will offer our full assistance and support as the County Council this week begins rolling out locally extra support for our most vulnerable residents announced on Saturday for 1.5 million vulnerable UK residents:

www.gov.uk/government/news/major-new-measures-to-protect-people-at-highest-risk-from-coronavirus.

Daniel Zeichner MP and Anthony Browne MP will be representing us at national level on this essential work and in pressing the government to make sure that residents, including those now without paid employment and local businesses temporarily shutting, get the financial support they need to live and survive this crisis.

Cambridge is a resilient city, and we have a strong commitment to helping others and to promoting fairness – something we have shown many times over the years. We will be thinking of the heroes working in vital jobs over the coming months. This includes some of our own council staff, all those people in essential services and, of course, all those working so hard and so selflessly in the NHS and at Addenbrookes who are protecting those needing care.

To help ease the pressure on our health service, please remember to follow safety and hygiene rules as they really matter, including to shield people most at risk, and look out for regular NHS and Government updates, which you can follow at: <https://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus> and in media updates.

Please help neighbours if you can, and consider supporting your nearest Mutual Aid group if you can spare some time. You can also register as a volunteer through the County Council Volunteer Hub which is assisting care delivery and ensuring people most in need have supplies, by emailing: CommunityCV@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

If you need help yourself, contact one of those local organisations offering help. And if you can, please consider donating to the new Cambridgeshire Coronavirus Community Fund: www.cambscf.org.uk/cambridgeshire-coronavirus-community-fund.html.

We hope this letter has helped you and updated you. Stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Lewis Herbert, Leader of Cambridge City Council

Councillor Tim Bick, Leader - Cambridge City Liberal Democrat Councillors

Councillor John Hipkin, Independent Councillor

Daniel Zeichner, MP for Cambridge

Anthony Browne, MP for South Cambridgeshire, including Queen Edith's ward.