Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s announcement

Following the announcement yesterday (Sunday) from the Prime Minister, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council’s leaders have recorded a video message saying while we wait for guidance there is no dramatic change.

Cllr Steve Count, leader of Cambridgeshire County Council can be viewed here.

Cllr John Holdich, leader of Peterborough City Council can be viewed here.

Foster carers needed to transform lives in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council are supporting this year’s Foster Care Fortnight campaign to help raise awareness about how the dedication and commitment of foster carer’s changes lives.

Foster Care Fortnight runs from the 11th - 24th May and is the UK’s largest foster care awareness raising campaign, it aims to show the positive impact foster care has on children’s and young people’s lives.

Foster carers accomplish incredible things every day, even in the face of a global crisis that has affected every one of us and impacted all aspects of our society. Despite the practical and emotional challenges that the coronavirus is bringing, foster carers continue to provide day-to-day support, love and stability to children and young people who can’t live with their birth families. They support children and young people's education, health, and social wellbeing, and
also help to maintain the children’s relationship with the people who are important to them but who they cannot currently see in person.

Both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council are keen to hear from people who can care for sibling groups of brothers and sisters, children with additional needs and teenagers.

Every year more foster carers are needed across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to make sure fostered children can live with the right foster carer for them. Despite the coronavirus, this year is no different, so anyone who thinks they might have the skills and experience to become a foster carer is urged to contact the fostering services.

Carers receive payments and allowances to help cover their time and expenses, as well as advice and guidance so they are supported every step of the way.

Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council encourage you to find out more about fostering.

For Cambridgeshire, visit the website or email fostering@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or call 0800 052 0078.

For Peterborough, visit the website or email FosteringandAdoption@Peterborough.gov.uk or call 0800 328 8433.

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**New service launched to provide extra help for shielding residents**

In the past six weeks the Countywide Hub has focused on meeting the basic needs of people who are shielding, providing essential supplies for those that have no other support available.

The Countywide Hub has now developed a new service working with the Red Cross and the council’s place-based coordinators, using staff redeployed from the libraries service and elsewhere, to enable it to support people’s wider health and wellbeing.

The first training sessions for redeployed staff took place last week, with initial requests expected to be fulfilled in the next few days.

This is likely to include support with things like shopping, running errands, gardening and skills development services.

The hub is also developing a set of leisure, pleasure and learning opportunities for shielded people to take part in. This will include aligning the food deliveries from the hub to a healthy eating class, either online or via recipe cards for those that don’t have digital access. Further details will be announced soon.

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**Youth services supporting The Kite Trust to help more young people**

Youth services across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire are helping third sector youth groups and charities to adapt their services to meet demand during these unprecedented times.

One of those charities being supported is The Kite Trust. Youth services supported The Kite Trust to obtain a grant for £5,000 from the Office of the Police and Crime Commission for Cambridgeshire to help upgrade its IT setup and continue to provide effective remote support services.

The Kite Trust promotes the health, well-being, and inclusion of LGBTQ+ young people across Cambridgeshire; raising awareness, supporting, and educating communities.
During lockdown the charity has been struggling to meet the demand for its services so far, as young people’s needs have changed and developed and because staff do not have the equipment they needed to work most effectively from home.

The charity has seen a 45% increase in the number of young people getting in touch with its services, up to 170 young people since the lockdown began. It's also nearly tripled the amount of time youth workers are spending supporting young people (184% increase) as their needs have changed and increased.

Thanks to the grant from the OPCC the charity can now buy laptops and other equipment for staff to support young people from home, including running online group sessions and providing one to one support.

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**Helpline launched to support those finding this time difficult**

The day to day adjustments that many are having to make due to a stressful job or juggling working from home, coupled with responsibilities at home, are very stressful for many of us.

Maintaining and enhancing the emotional and mental health of everyone is critical during these turbulent times.

Therefore the Cambridgeshire Workplace Chaplaincy has launched a free helpline for anyone in the workplace who needs help with stress and wants emotional support.

All calls are anonymous. The service is available during the hours of 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday plus an out of hours voicemail if you would like a chaplain to contact you at a later point.

CWC's multifaith chaplains are a diverse group who are happy to provide support regardless of whether you’re spiritual or religious – their aim is to listen and comfort.

Please call 0800 246 5193 if you need support.

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**Wellbeing plan launched as part of ‘Now We’re Talking’ mental health campaign**

A helpful wellbeing plan has been put together as part of the ‘Now We’re Talking’ mental health campaign.

Organisations across Cambridgeshire have come together to launch the campaign to get people talking and beat loneliness while self-isolating during the coronavirus outbreak.

Led by the local authority, NHS and third sector, the campaign helps people find where they can get increased mental health support.

The idea of the wellbeing plan is to help people get creative and think about things they can do that are good for their mental wellbeing.

A video to accompany the plan is available to view [here](#).

For more information visit Peterborough website [here](#) and Cambridgeshire website [here](#).

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**Local councils survey on impact of COVID-19**

Thank you to all the local council clerks who have already responded to the survey to understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local councils, the issues they are facing and the support they need going forward. If you haven’t yet had a chance to complete yours, there’s still time as the survey doesn’t close until Monday 18 May 2020.
Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire ACRE and CAPALC will be tailoring the support offered to local councils based on the responses received so it is vitally important that every local council takes part and provides a response.

The more responses we get, the more representative the data will be of the local council sector in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough so please find 10 minutes to take part here.

Sharing Communities Updates

You are welcome to share this Communities Update by forwarding the email to people in your community, who can also subscribe to receive updates from Cambridgeshire County Council by registering and selecting ‘Communities Updates’ from the list under Covid-19. We are asking city councillors to forward this update to their local residents associations.

To supply stories to be included in this newsletter, please contact:
parishesCV@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

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