

# NEWS RELEASE



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Date: 4 November 2020  
Issued by: Augusta Henning

Issue No: 224  
Version: 0.1

## **BOROUGH COUNCIL TEAM HITTING THE STREETS TO SUPPORT COVID-19 RESPONSE**

A dedicated council Covid-19 response team will be on the streets in key locations across the borough from today (Wednesday November 4) to help businesses and residents stay safe and keep to the latest lockdown restrictions.

The officers will be out and about to work with the community to reduce the chances of Covid-19 spreading. The team's remit will adapt to what's needed in different locations and will initially include:

- Working with our local businesses to help those that can continue to operate do so in a legal and Covid-safe manner, providing advice and support as necessary
- Providing a visible and reassuring presence to the public
- Offering advice and accurate information on Covid-19 regulations and guidance to businesses and the public
- Identifying examples of good practice we can share with others, potential hotspot areas that may need more focus or support and any potential lockdown breaches
- Signposting businesses to other support available to help them through this difficult period

In addition the Council will continue to provide advice and support where possible to businesses that are forced to close as a result of the new restrictions.

The team, which will include officers from the Public Protection Service as well as those redeployed from other parts of the council, will initially focus on potential 'hotspots' such as town centres, but will expand to cover other parts of the borough as needed. Officers from the Public Protection Service will also be carrying out checks in the evenings and weekends.

Cllr Charles Margetts, executive member for adult social care and public health said: "We are proud of the way the vast majority of our businesses and residents have responded to Covid-19 regulations and want to support them as best we can during these challenging times. But with further changes in regulations and guidance there are some who may be unsure and unfortunately some who may

deliberately flout the rules. This new team will be there for everybody – to provide reassurance and support, advice and engagement and, where necessary, to spot infringements.

“We are all in this together and the aim of this team is to provide visible engagement and encouragement to help the community protect itself from Covid-19. Initially, the team will focus on businesses and town centres but it will be flexible and will review priorities each week to ensure we have a dynamic response to any issues across the borough.”

As part of this initiative, there will be evening patrols today and over the next couple of nights as the country adjusts to the new restrictions. The council’s policy will be to engage with people and encourage the right behaviour but, should it be necessary, the council’s Public Protection Service and its police partners, will enforce the rules through prohibitions, fixed penalties and potentially prosecutions.

- ENDS -

**Further information:**

1. More from Cllr Charles Margetts, executive member for health, wellbeing and adult services, on [charles.margetts@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:charles.margetts@wokingham.gov.uk)