

## District Councillors Report May 4<sup>th</sup> 2020

There are no regular Parish Council meetings at present , or normal committee meetings at Stroud District Council.

So we thought an update from your District Councillors might be appreciated.

Officers are working from home and Council meetings are planned to resume soon using the Zoom platform.

However there has been considerable activity at SDC and this covers most of the main the major aspects.

All local Councils are working together and Gloucestershire County has established a Community Help Hub [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub)

All residents have received a letter from SDC with helpful advice and important information.

### **Financial Support for Business**

There has been much publicity from government, widely covered in the media, concerning the extensive assistance for employers, Business Rates holidays, furloughing help to maintain staff, business loans and grants.

SDC has received over £26m from the Government and so far has paid out over £21m to almost 2,000 businesses. Not all eligible enterprises have claimed yet so council officers are continuing to promote the opportunities.

There has recently been announced further help for businesses not eligible under the existing scheme. For this District it amounts to an additional £1.3m.

### **Support for Council Tax Payers – Hardship Fund**

SDC received £629,000 to support Council Tax payers who may be in hardship as a result of Covid-19. This fund will be to reduce certain taxpayers Council Tax by £150.

### **Community Resilience Fund**

So far £31,682 has been paid out to various groups , to financially assist those helping in the local community

Details of all the assistance available and the latest updates and advice can be found on the SDC website [www.stroud.gov.uk](http://www.stroud.gov.uk)

Throughout the District there has been a tremendously positive response at grass roots level to the crisis brought on by this pandemic and the ensuing measures.

Parish Councils have taken the lead and been pro-active in co-ordinating the response , helping community groups with information and assistance. A large number of community groups have sprung up as people have utilised “WhatsApp” and Facebook to help neighbours, and no report would be complete without a mention (and thank you) for all the

volunteers and all those little acts of kindness and help within the community by individuals.

**Warning regarding criminal scams by phone and on internet**

The risks of this has been mentioned before and now the NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre ) has issued some very useful guidance under a Cyber Aware Campaign. They offer 6 tips about keeping us all secure, details can be found at <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk> . So as they say Stay home, Stay connected, Stay Cyber Aware !!

Hopefully our next report will reflect positive moves forward as we recover from this unprecedented situation.

Until then, Keep safe.

Nigel Cooper

Julie Job

Keith Pearson

SDC Councillors – Painswick and Upton ward

.