

County Cllr Report – Covid Specific

For now, all OCC meetings have been cancelled given the work from home and social distancing guidelines.

Following the introduction of the regulations for holding virtual meetings, work has continued to put practical arrangements in place to make this happen using MS Teams. The legal and technical considerations are currently being finalised to ensure the solution is secure and legally compliant.

I am attaching the first iteration of Guidance from OCC. It is likely that this will be updated over time and I will send out updated versions as and when.

- The Councillor Priority Fund is now open and Covid-19 and applications to support the response to this are being prioritised. Please contact me directly to discuss. I am aware that CDC Cllrs also have a fund specifically for Covid assistance
- Our most vulnerable residents are those that are being advised to “shield” themselves. If a resident falls into that [category](#) they should have been contacted directly. If you are aware of anyone who thinks they should fall into that group, but have not been contacted. They are recommended to contact their doctor
- It is expected that many of those extremely vulnerable people who have been advised to “shield” themselves will have their own local support mechanism. But some will not have support and OCC/CDC have set up a dedicated contact point so they can get the help they need:
 - Tel 01865 89 78 20 (available Mon-Fri, 8.30am to 8pm, Sat-Sun 9am to 5pm)
 - Email: shield@oxfordshire.gov.uk
 - More detail [here](#)
- If in your volunteering you find residents who are not in the shielded group, but who are nonetheless vulnerable and if you are very concerned about their mental or physical welfare, you can contact OCC’s Adult Social Care Team on:
 - Tel: 0345 050 7666 (open Mon-Thu 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4pm)
 - Outside of those hours, 0800 833 408
- [Oxfordshire All In](#) is the go-to volunteers web site for the County. It allows groups and individual to sign up, but most importantly, it has an interactive map that allows vulnerable residents to find local support. OCC/CDC are working very closely with them. Interestingly, local businesses that are providing essential support for their local communities with grocery deliveries, takeaway food etc, are also encouraged to register so residents can find them. Please do promote Oxfordshire All In to all of your residents. It will be a very valuable resource in the weeks ahead

- I am sure that like me, you are already seeing people suffering from increased anxiety and the coming weeks will be a battle for people's minds as well as their bodies. The following may be helpful:
 - As local groups, you may want to set up some "phone buddies". This is helpful to those who want to volunteer, but can't necessarily go outside themselves. Loneliness and isolation will be a very real problem for a lot of people during the lockdown
 - [Public Health England](#) has launched a really useful website and phone service for those with mental health issues due to Coronavirus.
 - [Every Mind Matters](#) is a good source of advice to signpost people to
 - Citizens Advice North Oxon & South Northants are adapting their social prescribing service to offer help for those worried about Covid-19. The Community Connect team have a dedicated phone line, helping those suffering with anxiety, giving advice on how to keep well at home and sign posting other support networks available. They can be contacted through your GPs or you can self-refer by calling 0300 004 04 01
 - Age UK are also running a telephone buddies scheme. A new help-line number has been launched by our friends at Age UK Oxfordshire to offer a reassuring voice and advice to older people concerned about implications of self-isolating. Call 01865 411 288, leave your name and phone number and a trained call handler will call you back.
- Getting timely and accurate information is also vital and the following links may be useful:
 - Nationally: www.gov.uk/coronavirus
 - Locally: [CDC News & Updates](#) & [OCC News & Updates](#)

Once again, thank you so much for your efforts and do please contact me if there is anything I can do to assist you.

Coronavirus Information:

Please remember: The best source of Covid-19 information is the public health website www.gov.uk/coronavirus

And don't forget the golden rules to help slow the spread of almost any germs, including Coronavirus:

- Always carry tissues to catch your cough or sneeze
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap
- Use hand sanitiser when you are out and about & avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth.