

Len Mullins

01437 775387

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PEMBROKESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL: LEADER'S CORONAVIRUS UPDATE, MONDAY 23RD MARCH

The Authority's Leader, Councillor David Simpson, has provided a further coronavirus update for Monday 23rd March, as follows:

"I want to begin by re-emphasising a very important point. There is a great deal of concern on whether the current isolation and distancing measures are having sufficient effect to deal effectively with the speed and scale of the progress of the virus.

'I issued a statement on Sunday that had been prepared in consultation with leaders at Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire county councils; Hywel Dda University Health Board and MPs and AMs across the Hywel Dda region.

'That statement urged the public to stay at home and limit all but essential travel. It cannot be stressed enough how vital this advice is.

'In particular, we saw an influx of tourists into West Wales on the weekend and there is concern over the consequences this may have in the coming weeks in terms of pressure on our services and supply chains.

'I know there are concerns in the tourist industry and I understand these: we are strong supporters of the tourism and hospitality industry here in West Wales. However, our absolute top priority is the need to stop spread of this virus and also to protect our NHS from the increased pressures at a time when they will be stretched to the absolute limit.

'Press releases issued since my message on Friday are:

- Schools To Open For Children Of Keyworkers
<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/newsroom/schools-to-open-for-children-of-keyworkers>
- Leader's Update For 20th March:
<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/newsroom/leaders-coronavirus-update-friday-20th-march>
- Challenges Arising From Sudden Surge In Tourism:
<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/newsroom/covid-19-challenges-arising-from-sudden-surge-in-tourism>

- Beware Of Free School Meals Money Scam:
<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/newsroom/beware-of-free-school-meals-scam>
- Call For Action By Businesses:
<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/newsroom/call-for-action-by-businesses>

'These and other Council press releases on the current outbreak are available on the Council's website:

<http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk>

'The more general updates I want to highlight today are:

- Legal and Public Protection officers in the Council are working up arrangements for enforcing the Corona Virus Regulations given they already have licensing and other powers which could be used to enforce the provisions.
- Schools closed last Friday and the key workers care provision kicked off today. All our school transport routes ran today, albeit there was heavy underutilisation of them. We did this to make sure there was full accessibility to this care provision. All schools were open for key workers and 364 pupils attended them. We will be reviewing take up of this service and transport arrangements over the next few days to make a decision on schools being opened as hubs and transport of children to them.
- We have received some queries about protecting our school staff from contracting the virus. Guidance is available to all staff about operational working arrangements in terms of COVID19. The Council's aim is to maximise the safety of Council Staff and minimise the risk to the public in general and specifically to identified high risk groups.'

Useful links:

- www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus
- www.sir-benfro.gov.uk/coronafeirws
- <https://phw.nhs.wales/>
- [lechydd Cyhoeddus Cymru - Coronafeirws Newydd \(COVID-19\) - Cyngor hunan-ynysu](http://lechydd.cyhoeddus.cymru)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>

For further information contact: Len Mullins, Press and Public Relations Manager, on 01437 775387. The Council's press releases are also available on the Authority's website:

<http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk>

