



Adjustments to public meetings and events during coronavirus outbreak



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We are continuing to review our programme of public meetings, events and the services we deliver as we respond to the challenges presented by the coronavirus outbreak.

Our priority is to protect the health and safety of our residents, customers and staff, whilst doing everything possible to remain operational across core services.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Morris Bright MBE, explained: "We are having to make some very difficult decisions around our key public meetings and events, drawing on guidance from central government, and also focus on what's critical at this very challenging time. This means that some of our popular events and services, which often mean so much to our local communities across the borough, are having to be suspended for the time being."

Managing Director, Sajida Bijle, added: "We are continuing to deliver our core, operational services and will do our very best to keep our residents and customers informed of the adjustments that we are making. There is also a whole host of ways that people can stay in contact with us during this challenging time. We are focusing on crucial, key decision-making meetings and also looking at how we conduct them so that all remote access options are considered. Where possible, our staff are working remotely so that we do as much as we can to limit numbers at our Civic Offices."

Police and Crime Commissioner election:

The Police and Crime Commissioner election, which was due to take place on Thursday 7 May, has been postponed by the government until next year.

Civic Awards:

Our Civic Dinner and Awards Ceremony, due to take place on Sunday 5 April at Elstree Studios, has regrettably had to be postponed. Hosted by the Mayor of Hertsmere, Rabbi Cllr Alan Plancey, the event is a key part of the civic calendar that gives the Mayor and other dignitaries an opportunity to recognise the outstanding community work undertaken by individuals across the borough.

Cllr Plancey commented: "I'm so disappointed to postpone this popular and enjoyable event but know that everyone will understand the reasons for this decision. It's a postponement rather than a cancellation, and it's my intention to seek a date to hold the event as soon as possible."

Public meetings:

We are awaiting legal advice on key decision-making meetings - Planning Committee; Licensing Committee and Full Council. At this

time, these meetings are due to go ahead, although we are looking at adjustments that can be made to limit the number of attendees. Forthcoming meetings are Planning Committee on 19 March and Full Council on 22 April. There is no Licensing Committee until July.

The annual meeting of the council, a more ceremonial event when decisions about the new Mayor are made, was due to take place on 20 May. As that is not a key decision-making meeting, this is being deferred until further advice is issued.

A number of other events that had been due to be staged at the Civic Offices have also been postponed - these include a Welwyn Hatfield, Hertsmere and St Albans Domestic Abuse Forum event that was due to take place on Monday 23 March. All attendees have been notified. All training sessions programmed in at the Civic Offices, due to be attended by external visitors, such as Food Safety training, have also been postponed.

Area offices:

To help us in the efforts to maintain resilience for our Customer Services team, the difficult decision to close the area offices at Bushey and Potters Bar has been taken.

Other services and facilities:

We Move, She Moves - the popular programme that aims to get women and girls more active - has temporarily suspended some of its classes. We will do all it can to share advice and tips on how people can stay safe and healthy during this time via its online channels. For more information about classes that are still continuing, visit www.wemoveshemoves.me.uk

Healthy Hubs - Our newly-launched Healthy Hubs scheme has also been temporarily suspended. The one-stop shops provide information, advice, and support to improve the health and wellbeing of our community and were recently established at 96 Shenley Road, the Community Hub, both in Borehamwood and the Wylyotts Centre in Potters Bar. Despite the scheme being suspended, the advocates can still be contacted online for advice and support. For more information, visit www.hertsmere.gov.uk/healthyhubs

Chatter Tables - the very popular Chatter Tables initiatives, which provide an opportunity for older people to gather for a coffee and chat, have temporarily been suspended. Communities 1st, which has received lots of offers from people wanting to support others in the community, have established a scheme to help co-ordinate the support effort. Those people who are healthy or at low risk can be a Compassionate Community Connector and help others across the districts of Hertsmere, St Albans, Welwyn/Hatfield. Sign up now by visiting <https://www.communities1st.org.uk/COVID-19-community-signup>

Pest Control - We have had to temporarily suspend our pest control service. Please consider independent providers of this service at this time.

The museums at Bushey and Borehamwood (96 Shenley Road) are closed for the time being.

Staying in touch with us:

- Customer Services – telephone 020 8207 2277 or email customer.services@hertsmere.gov.uk
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• Contact your local councillor – www.hertsmere.gov.uk/findmycldr or call 020 8207 7558

For further information visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus
and www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

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