

## **SCC CORONAVIRUS BRIEFING FRIDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2020**

Somerset is beginning to move out of an emergency situation, and next week's briefing will be the last for the time being.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE**

The total number of cases in Somerset so far is 1281, an increase of just 2 cases in the past 7 days, with no additional deaths (199 in total).

There has been some negative feedback in relation to the 2 people who reported symptoms (Burnham-on-Sea), and self-isolated, but which resulted in two pubs having to close temporarily. There is concern that this will prevent others who are showing symptoms from coming forward. Media reports have not been helpful in this respect.

The trace and test system is working well, and as there is currently no cure or vaccine available, the message remains consistent – regular hand washing, social distancing, self-isolation and contact the NHS for trace and testing if anyone is showing any symptoms.

Questions have been raised in relation to the reliability of testing, which has shown to be most effective if given within 5 days of symptoms being evident, and provided it is administered accurately.

The challenge of visitors coming into the area remains; vigilance, and ensuring your own health and wellbeing remains paramount.

All 3,000+ SCC staff have been surveyed with a 2/3 response. 90% feel that they are well informed; 94% feel trusted; 6% have been struggling with the situation. There has been a marginal impact on services during lockdown.

Unions are being consulted in relation to future ways of working moving forward.

One impact has been the increase of those seeking more rural locations in which to live.

### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

Somerset continues to receive praise for the way in which it has handled the pandemic.

There is the opportunity for those who are unemployed to begin to work for the care sector as volunteers.

There has been a rise in those with mental health problems struggling to cope, in addition to a slight increase in suicides.

Working with organisations such as SPARKS and CAB has been positive, and activities with local communities has been really successful, with 1306 different events having taken place and hundreds of people supported. The importance of continuing this is recognised.

### **VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITY**

A volunteer forum has been set up to consider actions that have been successful, capture examples of good practice, and consider where improvements could be made, in addition to the impact of the Coronavirus on voluntary organisations, particularly in relation to future fund-raising activities.

Overall there remains concern over the behaviour of some individuals and groups who feel that the danger of the Coronavirus is now over – IT IS MOST DEFINITELY NOT.

