



# CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Keeping you  
informed



Issue 11 – Tuesday 30 June 2020

## North Somerset Council

### Contact details:

- North Somerset Together has been set up to help residents who have no support from family or friends and who are socially isolated. They can access the support they need during the coronavirus pandemic and beyond by visiting [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together) or ringing 01934 427 437.
- For the latest information and support available during the Covid 19 pandemic visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/coronavirus)
- For the latest news from North Somerset Council visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/news](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/news)
- Sign up to our North Somerset Life online edition at [www.northsomersetlife.co.uk](http://www.northsomersetlife.co.uk)
- For general council enquiries visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/connect) or call 01934 888 888.
- For all business assistance and employee support please contact North Somerset Council's Economy Team: Email - [Business@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:Business@n-somerset.gov.uk) or Twitter @Innorthsomerset or (01934) 426 266
- Updates will also be posted to the council's Facebook and Twitter feeds.

**Reopening of services.** We are working hard to reopen services where it is safe to do so.

**Car parking.** The majority of our car parking is now open again with the exception of The Beach, Clevedon and Portishead Esplanade. People are being asked to pay online or by using the MiPermit app.

**Play areas.** We are working to reopen our play areas in line with strict Government guidelines.

A list of play areas can be found [on our website](#).

**Libraries.** Libraries in North Somerset will begin a phased reopening from Monday 6 July.

In line with government advice, changes to the library services will come in gradually, focusing on the health and safety of staff, customers, residents and volunteers. Libraries teams are working on what will be offered at each site and will reveal information on the council's website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/libraries) on Monday 6 July.

**Supported bus services.** A number of our supported bus services have restarted from Monday (29 June).

The following have resumed operation:

- 88 – revised timetable (all journeys except the 12.00pm service from Nailsea to Clevedon)
- A5 – full timetable
- C1 – full timetable
- C2 – full timetable

Passengers are reminded that journeys should still only be made for essential travel as the vehicles will be operating with limited capacity onboard. When using these services, passengers are expected to observe all published social distancing advice and to follow instructions given by the driver.

**Facebook Live event.** Our Executive members will be holding another Facebook Live event on Thursday evening (2 July), giving residents the opportunity to get questions answered about local issues.

The event will appear on the council's Facebook page at 6pm.

We have had great feedback from our residents on previous sessions. Thank you.

**Satisfaction with local government.** Since 2012 the Local Government Association has been running [regular polling](#) to find out what people think about their council and local area. [The latest results](#) show satisfaction with local councils is at its best since the research began.

The poll was carried out between 11 and 14 June and found that satisfaction with the way councils run things is the highest at 75 per cent. 68 per cent of residents think their council acts on their concerns – up from an average of 60 per cent. 69 per cent think their council keeps them informed – an increase of 9 per cent since February. Trust in councils is now at 71 per cent, which is a 12-percentage point increase from the last score of 59 per cent in February.

Whilst trust in many public institutions has fallen in recent weeks, councils are bucking that trend, which is down to the great work of our staff in responding to the crisis.

**Local outbreak management plan webinar.** Every local authority is now required to have a local outbreak management plan in place. The plan sets out what the council will do, alongside partners at a local, regional and national level to identify and respond effectively to a potential outbreak of the COVID-19 virus.

The plan will set the direction for future management of the virus in our area with a supporting action plan that will continue to adapt to the situation that we face and the range of resources and national guidance that are available.

Yesterday (**Monday 29 June**) we held a COVID-19 webinar, focusing on the management plan. The session was led by our Director of Public Health, Matt Lenny and chaired by our Chief Executive, Jo Walker.

You can view it online at: <https://youtu.be/B0u9Gw1icX4>  
Information about the local outbreak management plan can also be found from today at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lomp](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lomp)

**Mobile testing unit (MTU) in Weston.** A mobile testing unit has been operating in Locking Road car park in Weston-super-Mare to enable more Covid-19 tests to be carried out locally. It is increasing the number of tests available to the local community by 1,500 a week – and is particularly helpful for those who might struggle to get to the airport for a test.

The unit, which is available for pre-booked coronavirus tests only, will remain in Weston until at least Monday 6 July. The car park will not be available for public parking during this time.

The unit will operate from 10am until 4pm each day and appointments can be made through <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested> or calling 119.

The eligibility criteria for tests includes:

- Anyone of any age with symptoms
- Any essential worker with symptoms
- Members of the household of essential workers who are symptomatic.

More guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#who-can-be-tested>

Essential workers will be given priority.

For tests to be effective you must be symptomatic. More on the symptoms of covid-19 can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/check-if-you-have-coronavirus-symptoms/>

**New support offers financial resilience for small businesses.** Small businesses in the West of England will get free help to manage their finances in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic thanks to a new programme launched by Metro Mayor Tim Bowles.

The new accountancy support programme, delivered in partnership with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), will provide small businesses with a financial check-up, as well as bespoke advice and guidance on effective financial management.

The programme will help businesses:

- Better understand their financial position and assess how they could strengthen their financial resilience, for example analysis of their balance sheet, profit and loss and cashflow with guidance as to where there are areas for investigation or resolution
- Understand how they could benefit from new financial management processes and best practice, for example improving financial reporting and forecasting, data management and controls
- Access a network of expert financial support from ICAEW
- Understand how they will benefit in the future from support of chartered accountants
- The programme also aims to enable growth and boost the productivity of small businesses, through hands-on coaching to help them adopt new tools and processes and will be delivered by a chartered accountant

Eligible businesses will not be currently using a chartered accountant, and will be based in the West of England (Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire), with 5 -100 employees.

Businesses interested in participating in the programme should contact the West of England Growth Hub for further information:

[www.wearegrowth.co.uk](http://www.wearegrowth.co.uk)  
[wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

**Abbots Pool closed.** We have closed Abbots Pool nature reserve in Abbots Leigh following increased concerns for public health and issues with environmental damage and anti-social behaviour.

Since the lockdown restrictions have been relaxed, more and more people have visited the site and the issues have worsened considerably during the hot weather.

Visitors have been ignoring social distancing, and using the site as a toilet which both pose a significant threat to public health.

Other problems caused at the site include large amounts of litter, damage to the woodland and verges on the track leading to the site and to the eco-system of the pool itself which has been used for swimming, even though no swimming is allowed on site.

**North Somerset Together.** We have launched this service to link residents in need to the fantastic support being offered by communities.

North Somerset Together is an initiative that is helping residents who have no support from family or friends and who are socially isolated access the support they need during the coronavirus pandemic and beyond.

It is also helping those who want to volunteer to get involved or donate to link up with the right organisations, and signpost businesses to relevant information.

It brings together a wealth of information to help anyone in the community find out what is available, what help is needed, and contact groups and organisations directly.

Contact [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together) or ring 01934 427 437.

**Business support.** We continue to administer the **business grant schemes** for the estimated 3,500 eligible businesses in North Somerset. So far (as of Monday 29 June) we have processed 3,259 grants and paid out £39.4m.

Any eligible businesses who have not yet applied are urged to do so as soon as possible.

The schemes come in the form of a small business grant fund and a retail, hospitality and leisure grant fund. Grants are between £10,000 and £25,000 depending on circumstances.

Some businesses are still missing out on government money to support their business. Please encourage anyone you know who may be eligible to take up this offer.

Once their eligibility has been confirmed, payment will be made between seven and 10 days. If they have any further questions on this or other support you can apply [here](#), can contact North Somerset Council's Economic Development Team on 01934 426 266, email [business@n-somerset.gov.uk](mailto:business@n-somerset.gov.uk) or Twitter: @innorthsomerset

North Somerset Council's Economy Team has collated a range of essential business, third sector and employee resources from government and other trusted sources to support North Somerset residents and businesses with decision making during the pandemic.

Information on grants and other sources of funding, Universal Credit, employment and skills support, business adaptation and government campaigns - Pick for Britain - can be found here: <https://innorthsomerset.co.uk/covid-19-support/>

Together we are stronger  
[www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/together)

