

**Covid 19**  
**Situational Statement**  
**17<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**Council Statement**

We fully empathise and share in the heightened sense of anxiety across communities in the current national situation - one which has no precedent in recent times.

This is a fast-developing and changing national and international situation. Be assured that we have full business continuity planning in place across our services in readiness.

There is a national, regional and local command and decision-making structure in place – from the national COBRA meeting led by the Prime Minister downwards - and we are playing our full part as your County Council. This is now in full operation.

The regional planning and response for North Wales is led by the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG), a group made up of senior professionals from health, emergency and public service partners. This is meeting frequently and both follows the direction of national decision-makers and advisors and contributes to their work with feedback and escalated requests for support. We are a very active member of SCG through the Chief Executive and other lead officers.

A number of members of the public have asked about our role as a council. The response to the national situation is being led by the UK Government and the devolved national Governments, and is heavily reliant on the advice of the Public Health national agencies and the appointed medical and public health experts. We follow their lead and make regional and local decisions accordingly. Although we play a very important role, we are not the lead in the public eye and must work to national and regional advice and direction. This is why we refer people to the authoritative sources of advice on personal health and well-being, and medical support, such as Public Health Wales.

We will issue local public statements on local responses and service arrangements as and when necessary.

We welcome and will be fully supporting community self-support action through our voluntary and charitable partners, Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC), community organisations and Town and Community Councils.

The situation will develop quickly and we will make decisions on prioritising our resources for the most critical services as necessary.

We will make our first announcements on the temporary closure of local facilities and services from today. We have already restricted visits to the residential care homes we operate, and have encouraged our independent care home providers to do the same. We have advised head teachers to restrict access to schools for all but pupils and their teaching and support staff and to cancel all non-essential communal events. We are issuing daily advice to social care partners and to schools.

All essential Council services are running as normal at this stage. This might be subject to change. As an employer we have been taking steps to protect our workforce over the past two weeks. We are now introducing further steps to extend home and remote working to keep our workforce safe so that they can support continuity of services to the public.

All non-essential Council meetings are stood down until further notice including all public Council meetings and events.

We appeal for all to help us maintain a sense of calm, to show personal responsibility in following national advice, and to contribute to community and family actions to support the most vulnerable wherever you can.

*Colin Everett, Chief Executive and Councillor Ian Roberts, Leader*

### **Welsh Local Government Association Statement**

We want to reassure residents that, in collaboration with our partners, all necessary steps will be taken to ensure the wellbeing of our communities.

At the moment council services remain open. Following the government announcement today, we will be assessing the position and making further detailed announcements tomorrow.

Government guidance is that schools should remain open for the time being. The message to parents is that, as in other areas of Wales, schools will open tomorrow as normal and the position will be kept under continuous review.

Residents and parents are urged to follow the Government's revised social distancing guidelines and anyone who is experiencing symptoms should continue to follow Public Health Wales advice which can be found here: <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

*Chris Llewellyn, Chief Executive and Councillor Andrew Morgan, Leader (WLGA statement dated 16.03.20)*