

4F. Report sent by: District Councillor Gill Forman

Report for Great Alne Parish Council Meeting 7th July 2020

SDC have been operating several schemes to help businesses and residents financially through the crisis caused by Corona Virus:

- Hardship fund for residents receiving Local Council Tax support - £660,000 of funding was received from Government to give extra help to residents receiving this grant. Recipients will receive £150.00 which will automatically be deducted from their 2020 Council Tax Bill. To date 3546 residents have received totalling £526,000.
- Business Rate grant scheme – Stratford District Council have paid out more than £30 million to 2800 businesses under this scheme so far.
- Discretionary Business Rate scheme – This scheme will go live on the SDC website on the 8th of June for 3 weeks. The aim of this scheme is to help businesses who were not eligible to make a claim under the Business Rate grant scheme.

There is also a government grant scheme which is interest free for the first year, then at the Bank of England rate.

SDC received £35m funding from Government to support these schemes.

Stratford-Upon-Avon District is the 4th worst affected area in the Country economically due to Covid-19. This is due to the reliance on the tourism and automotive sectors

The impact on the council is that we are calculating an estimated £8m loss of income from things like leisure and parking over this year. So far Government have handed out £1.3m to us, however It is not known if Government will cover the rest or any of the shortfall. Representations have been made to Government at all levels. SDC do have some financial reserves but that would only help us through the next 1-2 years. It is inevitable that difficult decisions will have to be made this year and for several more years to come to balance SDC finances.

SDC have set up a working group of some Councillors and Officers to establish strategies of how to support our businesses, including tourism, and kick start our local economy. This group will work closely with Warwickshire County Council and other local groups e.g. CWLEP, Growth Hub, and local tourist bodies.

4000 people are either directly or indirectly employed in tourism in SUA which is 30% of the total workforce

The figures and information in this report were accurate at the time I wrote this report (7/6/20).