



## Message from the Chief Executive Althea Loderick

I want to extend my ongoing thanks to you all. The past few months have been incredibly difficult for people in terms of their physical and emotional wellbeing. As services begin to reopen, we are asking a very limited number of colleagues to return to the workplace, to join the many that have been undertaking front-line duties throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. While a small number of you will be returning, many of you will continue working from home. We want to ensure we continue to support you regardless of where you are working. I know all staff are working above and beyond the call of duty to help us continue servicing our local community.

This update has been created specifically for staff who don't have access to council IT systems so that we can keep you up-to-date on general news about Coronavirus and any issues specific to your service. Please check the new staff pages on the website: [www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo](http://www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo) regularly for updates.

Thank you!

# Coronavirus (Covid-19)

## Keeping you in touch

- This is a slide-based briefing which should be cascaded to all staff through line management chains and shared / discussed with all those who are not on email at weekly or daily briefings. It is issued to Managers at least once a week on Thursday, or more frequently as required.
- It can be also be accessed on the new staff information page: [www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo](http://www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo)
- More detailed information and guidance is on the **new Covid19 pages** on the Intranet and managers should ensure all staff (who have email) are able to access it.
- **This briefing covers:**
  - Latest national / regional / local figures re cases
  - Latest guidance and advice
  - Key messages for staff in Newham

# National and local status

The number of infections recorded as of **4.10pm on 5 August 2020**:

- **307,184 cases** of coronavirus have been confirmed.
- There have been **46,364 deaths** in the UK.
- Newham has **1,342 confirmed cases**.
- Newham has had **226 deaths** \*\*

***Please note:** new recording methods were introduced on August 3, 2020. \*\*\*Denotes deaths since the start of the pandemic of people who had tested positive for COVID-19.*



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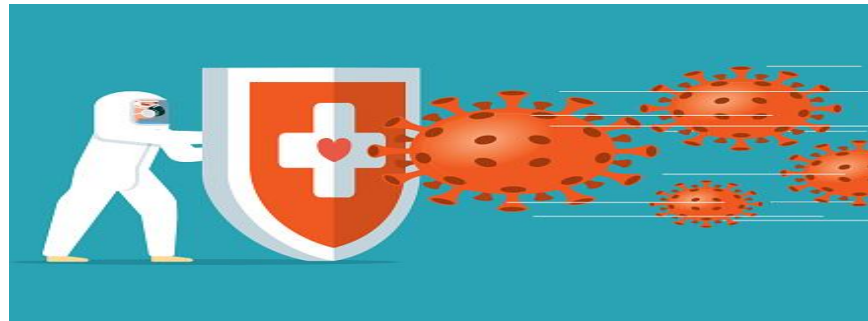
# #AskAlthea – update

- The CEO answered a number of questions on last week's #AskAlthea call on returning to work and how that might happen, both immediately and in the future.
- **We won't be rushing into making people return to work** and in her staff update this week Althea stated that **it is unlikely that we will return to 5 day a week in office working for everyone.**
- Other questions that arose were about finance and the possible impact on jobs. Senior managers are looking closely at budgets as we have incurred a lot of unanticipated costs and lost income through responding to Covid. Expenditure will be reduced where possible with budget challenge sessions expected over the next few weeks for directorate leaders
- Staff were assured there are no plans for wholesale job cuts. Planned restructures are proceeding, which may change how some of staff work but there is no across the board requirement to reduce staff numbers.
- If we all follow the financial guidelines and rules diligently, we are much less likely to incur additional cost or create more requirements for saving.



# Staff update: 06/08/2020

- The **Smarter Newham team is reaching out to identify any remaining Newham staff who need to get a new machine.** Staff that are waiting for a new machine (or some other work to be done) are asked to complete a quick survey by next Wednesday (12th August 2020). (If you don't have access to our Intranet, a manager can complete it on your behalf.)
- If you still have an old machine, you should return it to Smarter Newham at Dockside Office (the Hive).
- If you are a manager and want to talk to the **Smarter Newham team about the entire team** please contact them directly at [SmarterNewham@newham.gov.uk](mailto:SmarterNewham@newham.gov.uk).
- Become a **COVID-19 Health Champion** by sharing accurate and up to date information with your networks can help stop the spread and save lives. You can help by joining more than 230 Newham residents and Newham Council staff as a COVID-19 Health Champion.
- To sign up go to <https://www.newham.gov.uk/covidhealthchampions> or contact Anne Bowers in the Public Health Team.



06 August 2020

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# Staff update: 06/08/2020

- New e-learning courses are available for staff including: **Understanding Race Bias, Cultural Awareness, Bullying and Harassment, The Effective Bystander, Inclusion Essentials, The Impact of Micro-Behaviours**, and many more! These courses particularly support the 'Equality', 'Respect' and 'Together' elements of our HEART values.
- We are working hard to make Newham a truly fair place that champions equality and eradicates discrimination; these courses are just one of many initiatives we are taking to achieve this.
- Courses can be **accessed on the intranet**. If you experience any issues, please contact the Learning and Development Team via email [CEX-HRLearning&Development@oneSource.co.uk](mailto:CEX-HRLearning&Development@oneSource.co.uk).
- All employees have a responsibility to be aware of the **Gifts and Hospitality policy**, which regulate the acceptance of gifts and hospitality by Staff in the Council.
- The Gifts and Hospitality policy states that all gifts should be refused and returned. Where a gift cannot be returned or is of a trivial nature it **should be declared when the value is above of £25.00**
- In the case of hospitality, employees may only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to exchange information or represent the council in the community. **Any hospitality over £25 must be authorised by line managers prior to acceptance and must be declared.**
- For further information, please contact Human Resources on extension 33709 or [Louise.Purdie@oneSource.co.uk](mailto:Louise.Purdie@oneSource.co.uk)



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# Return to work – risk assessment

- **Covid-19 affects some people more than others** – including those with pre-existing health conditions, black & minority ethnic communities, older people, & affects men more than women.
- To enable us to make decisions about how and where people work, we are **asking everyone working onsite or in the office and everyone who is about to be asked to come back to onsite working, to work with your manager to complete a ‘Covid-19 Individual Vulnerability Questionnaire and Risk Assessment’**.
- This **risk assessment** will ensure that your manager discusses with you the **measures already put in place to make your working environment safer**, and that you **work together to consider any risk factors specific to you** and whether those risk factors require us to take more steps to support you.
- The **Covid-19 HR Guidance on safe attendance at the workplace is available** [www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo](http://www.Newham.gov.uk/staffinfo) (under “Return to Work”).
- **All managers will be sent a link to the risk assessment form, and to a step-by-step guide** on how to work with you to conduct the risk assessments.
- Your manager will also talk to you about other aspects, including your **arrangements for travelling to and from work** and whether we can help **stagger your start and finish times to avoid peak travel**.



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# Staff reminders: 06/08/2020

- If you hold a **full first aid at work qualification**, and **your certificate expired or expires between May and September 2020**, we have been granted permission to extend current certificates by a further 3 months.
- Staff whose certificate has or is due to expire **can apply for refresher training**. We have limited availability and a reduced class size so please get in touch as soon as possible to secure your space by emailing [firstaid@onesource.co.uk](mailto:firstaid@onesource.co.uk)
- For those staff considering cycling to work - **The Cycle to Work scheme enables you to save money on a new bike** and accessories while spreading the cost over 12 months.
- The scheme is open to **permanent employees and employees on a fixed term contract with at least 12 months remaining**. For more information [www.cyclescheme.co.uk](http://www.cyclescheme.co.uk).
- Staff can also take advantage of the **Try Before You Buy cycle scheme**. Trial a new or nearly new bike for a monthly fee from £10 for kids / £20 for adults / £20 for folding / £50 for electric. Find out more: <https://www.newham.gov.uk/transport-streets/try-bike-scheme/1>
- Staff are reminded that if you need advice or support, please **ask for help at any time**. You can access our Employee Assistance Programme [www.employeeassistance.org.uk](http://www.employeeassistance.org.uk) (access code: Newham), with freephone access **24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year to counsellors and advisors** on 0800 328 1437 (minicom: 01482 661 814). You can also contact [hr@newham.gov.uk](mailto:hr@newham.gov.uk) and ask for a chat with a Mental Health First Aider.



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# Reminder: Staff mental health training

- **There are extra dates available in August for online Mental Health Awareness training** for staff. The training will be delivered via Zoom and you will need to ensure your device has access to a microphone and a camera. The **four hour introductory course is designed to increase mental health awareness, provide an understanding of how to look after wellbeing** and challenge stigma towards mental health. The following dates are available:

- 13<sup>th</sup> August 10am-2pm (Course code PMH400)
- 18<sup>th</sup> August 12.30pm-4.30pm (Course code PMH401)
- 20<sup>th</sup> August 9.30am-1.30pm (Course code PMH402)
- 25<sup>th</sup> August 9.30am-1.30pm (Course code PMH403)
- 26<sup>th</sup> August 12.30pm-4.30pm (Course code PMH404)



- On completion of the course you will get a certificate of attendance and a manual will be sent to your place of work for you to keep and refer to whenever you need it.
- If you **would like to attend and have your manager's authorisation, you can enrol** by calling the adult college on 01708 434 955 select option 1, and then option 1 again. Or email [wellbeing@newham.gov.uk](mailto:wellbeing@newham.gov.uk).
- Margaret Fasanya has set up a **Newham Staff Walking Group** to promote Mental Health and Wellbeing. The walks will explore open spaces and forests including Epping Forest and take place either every Saturday, or fortnightly in the morning or afternoon, and will take 2 hours.
- For staff to express their interest email [margaret.fasanya@newham.gov.uk](mailto:margaret.fasanya@newham.gov.uk)

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