

Report from Margaret Dewsbury, County Councillor

NCC staff are continuing to work from home. Many have been seconded to other roles supporting the COVID 19 work but some are now returning to their usual work and are being replaced by volunteers.

NCC Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee have held virtual meetings on line and other committees will start meeting virtually over the next few weeks.

Norfolk will be part of a pilot scheme to Track and Test the virus. Plans are being prepared. Testing has been expanded to include children under five years of age.

The Council has set up a Care Home Support Plan to help keep residents and staff safe and manage any sign of COVID 19.

Headteachers have been allowed to make the decision on whether or not to reopen their school as they are aware of the limits of the layout of their buildings and their current staffing capacity. They have been given guidance on cleaning, distancing and protective measures eg movement around the school and spacing in classrooms.

The larger recycling centres are now open. The nearest to this area are Ketteringham, Dereham and Mile Cross in Norwich.

Libraries, museums and adult learning are continuing to offer more and more activities to keep children occupied and to support mental health and wellbeing of adults. The Archive Centre has just begun offering 'History begins at Home' on Facebook.

Highways work has continued where possible and they are about to begin verge cutting. They are also working with the districts to look at how pavements can be widened and roads temporarily closed to allow social distancing so that people can support the shops in the market towns.

The first group of 24 fire fighters who volunteered for a four week secondment to assist the NHS worked 3,336 hours (278 shifts). They have been replaced by another group of 25 fire fighters and a further group are undertaking training in order to replace them.

All councils are looking at how they can support the economy and enable local businesses to start operating again. They are working with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership which has been providing support and advice for businesses and allocating grants.