

Stirling Matters - November 2020 (12th Edition)

News from Stirling's Parliamentary Team

'The number of COVID-19 cases in the Stirling area have remained stubbornly high, and with worries continuing over pressure on our health services, we have been moved into Protection Level 4 along with 10 other local authority areas in Scotland. We appreciate this will be unwelcome news to many of our constituents, who have had a difficult time of late. But inaction now would lead to longer, tougher action later. The priority must remain to save lives, and we're working closely with local health professionals, Stirling Council, and national government to ensure businesses, employees and communities across Stirling can access any help they may need. We all must pull together and re-double our efforts.'

- Bruce Crawford MSP and Alyn Smith MP

Keep up-to-date with current campaigns and news on my website:

www.alynsmith.scot

I'm active at: **@alynsmith**

Facebook: **https://www.facebook.com/alynsmithSNP**

Twitter: **www.twitter.com/alynsmith**

Keep up-to-date with current campaigns and news on my website:

www.brucecrawford.scot

I'm active at: **@RHBruceCrawford**

Facebook: **https://www.facebook.com/BruceCrawfordSNP**

Twitter: www.twitter.com/RHBruceCrawford

Stirling placed in Level 4 protections

The Stirling Council area has joined 10 other local authorities across Scotland to rise to Level 4 of Scotland's Strategic Framework to tackle the spread of COVID-19.

The measures came into force at 6pm on Friday 20th November, for a period of three weeks.

Tightened restrictions around travel, social interaction and for businesses are aimed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the Stirling area, and reduce pressure on local health services.

Read more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/11/20/stirling-mp-and-msp-respond-to-level-four-restrictions/>

Bruce seeks clarity for onlines sales

Bruce asked First Minister Nicola Sturgeon for further clarity this week for local retailers, as many face closure due to the enhanced Level 4 restrictions.

Concerns had been raised at the disadvantage small and boutique businesses may experience, when faced with competition from mixed-retail stores such as supermarkets who remain open.

The First Minister confirmed stores could utilise online click-and-collect or telephone delivery services.

Watch it here:

<https://www.facebook.com/BruceCrawfordSNP/posts/153844638634688>
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EU Fund access cut short by Brexit

Alyn and Bruce have backed Scottish Government proposals for a replacement to EU Structural Funds post-Brexit.

To date, billions have been invested in communities across the UK from these EU Funds.

Locally, the Stirling Council LEAP Programme has been supported from the European Social Fund to the tune of £700,000 - enabling important work on employability and upskilling for local people.

Read more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/11/20/stirling-set-to-lose-out-as-vital-eu-funding-to-close/>

UK Treasury must assist Scotland or hand over powers

Bruce has urged the UK Treasury to go further to support businesses and employment across Scotland - or devolve the required powers to Scotland and let us get on with it.

Borrowing powers to enable a swift economic response to COVID remain reserved at the UK level - and Stirling businesses urgently require further assistance.

Read more here:

<https://www.facebook.com/BruceCrawfordSNP/posts/1533079983550195>

Keep VAT cut for hospitality and tourism, says Alyn

Alyn Smith MP has written to the UK government regarding the new 5% VAT rate for the hospitality and tourism sectors, urging the UK Chancellor to make this permanent to support economic recovery.

The 5% rate was implemented over the summer, and is set to expire in March 2021.

Read more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/11/16/stirling-mp-calls-for-permanent-hospitality-and-tourism-vat-cut/>

Stirling residents call for rethink on fireworks

Alyn Smith MP has concluded a public consultation on fireworks, and the Stirling public overwhelming back stricter controls and measures.

From survey respondents, 89% would like to see private use banned and more restrictions on the sale and use of fireworks.

Find out more here:

<https://alynsmith.scot/2020/11/16/stirling-firework-survey-89-support-banning-private-use/>

Praise for progress on new social security for Scotland

Bruce Crawford MSP and Stirling SNP Councillor Evelyn Tweed have praised the Scottish Government for continued progress on social security, despite the coronavirus pandemic.

New life-changing benefits will open for application next year, including the Child Disability Payment.

Read more here:

<http://www.brucecrawford.scot/stirling-politicians-praise-scottish-government-social-security-progress/>

New Aberfoyle flood warning system welcomed

Bruce Crawford and Evelyn Tweed have welcomed the introduction of a new flood warning system in Aberfoyle, to alert residents and visitors of potential disruption.

The new, free text and call alert system has been introduced by SEPA, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.

Read more here:

<http://www.brucecrawford.scot/local-politicians-welcome-aberfoyle-flood-warning-system/>

For further help & support, visit:

NHS Inform: COVID-19

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poison/coronavirus-covid-19>

Scot Gov:Business Support

<https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/>

Stirling Council: Guidance

<https://www.stirling.gov.uk/planning-building-the-environment/emergencies-emergency-planning/coronavirus/>