Press Release from Buckinghamshire Council

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Keeping Buckinghamshire safe as lockdown relaxes

Your actions count; together we can prevent the virus spreading, avoid a localised outbreak and protect Buckinghamshire.

That's the message from Buckinghamshire Council as the country sees more restrictions than ever being lifted in the coming days. From this Saturday (4 July), facilities like libraries and outdoor play areas will start to reopen, and government guidance on meeting people outside your household is changing.

The Council says that it's really important to remember that the virus has not gone away, and it's still the case that anyone can get it, and anyone can spread it, often with no symptoms. A second spike or local lockdown remains a real threat so we must all continue to follow current guidelines and remember that all our actions count.

It's absolutely essential that we all continue to do the following:

- Follow social distancing when out and about; leave space between you and others and avoid physical contact with people outside your household (unless they are part of your extended household bubble).
- Wear a face covering such as a scarf or mask over your mouth and nose in places they're required. We must do this on public transport as well as in hospitals and doctors surgeries.
- Consider wearing a face covering in other public places too such as shops and supermarkets. By doing this you are protecting others.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- Stay at home and self-isolate if you have symptoms of the virus (a new continuous cough or a high fever, or a loss of/change to your sense of taste or smell), if a member of your household has them or if you have been in close contact with someone who has a confirmed case of COVID or are advised to do so by the Test and Trace service.
- Book a test as soon as you develop any symptoms as the test is most accurate within a few days of your symptoms starting. Please visit the website to find your nearest testing centre. https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/ If you don't have access to

the internet you can call 119. The sooner you are tested, the sooner the test and trace system can be activated which will slow the spread of the virus and save lives.

- Travel by walking or cycling whenever you can. If this is not possible use your own car and don't drive passengers from outside your household. New travel measures to help encourage walking and cycling are currently being developed by the Council.

Buckinghamshire Council Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health, Gareth Williams, said that the next few weeks will be a really testing time for the country. "It may be tempting to feel that the pandemic is almost over, but whilst many of us can make the most of the easing of restrictions, there are still thousands of people in Buckinghamshire who are shielding or vulnerable.

"Your actions will not only protect you, your family and your friends, but also all those people who really need our help to keep the virus at bay, so that they too can resume their normal lives.

"As we have seen in other areas of the country, a localised outbreak or lockdown is a very real possibility, and no-one would want that to happen here, so if we all continue to follow the rules, we can prevent the virus spreading and avoid having to reverse the easing of the lockdown rules.

Gareth added, "Thank you for doing your bit to stay safe and protect Bucks. Your actions will help to keep our communities open, allow us all to keep seeing friends and family and hopefully help defeat this deadly virus as soon as possible."

If you are unsure about how any of the current guidance applies to you then please check on the www.gov.uk/coronavirus website, which is regularly updated.

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