

24 July 2020

Cabinet Office
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Our Ref: PT/PW20061

Dear Businesses

Re. Business communities in Wiltshire and Swindon

As you know, today sees new legislation come into place which will make it compulsory for people to wear face coverings when visiting businesses such as shops, shopping centres, supermarkets and takeaway outlets.

We believe the vast majority of the public are supportive of this measure and understand that this is a practical way of ensuring our local economies can start moving again, while at the same time keeping us all as safe as possible.

The Government has been clear that businesses will be expected to encourage compliance with the law and can refuse entry to those not complying. Those who fail to comply, and are not exempt with the new rules, could face a fine of up to £100.

Here in Wiltshire, our focus is on educating and encouraging the public to adhere to the new rules and only using enforcement as a last resort.

We have been working closely as a local partnership to ensure a joined-up approach on this matter and we are hopeful that the vast majority of people, will either wear masks willingly or will be persuaded to comply by the wider public.

We are sure you will all appreciate that Wiltshire Police has limited resources as officers continue to respond to an already large range of emergencies, incidents and crimes.

Our hope is that police action will not be required, but, if businesses have tried everything to get customers to comply and a situation is becoming volatile, then of course they should phone the police and they will provide the necessary assistance and support.

Throughout the COVID19 pandemic we've all spoken publicly about the importance of personal responsibility, but also the need for everyone to behave in a way which is socially responsible. Our message to the people of Swindon and Wiltshire is clear - at times like this we must not just think of ourselves but of those who are more vulnerable.

We believe this summer will prove to be an important milestone in the battle against COVID19. Not only do we need to continue to be cautious with regards to the spread of the disease and hopefully avoiding a second spike, we also need to help get the economy moving again – returning to work, visiting cafes and restaurants, and supporting and shopping at our businesses.

You can read the full Government legislation here -
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/791/contents/made>

We wish you every success as you reopen and restart your businesses and thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully



Philip Whitehead
Leader of Wiltshire Council



Angus Macpherson
Police and Crime
Commissioner for Wiltshire
and Swindon



Kier Pritchard
Chief Constable
Wiltshire Police