

Buckinghamshire Council September Report

Bucks Business First

For those of you who may not be aware, quite a lot is happening within Buckinghamshire by Bucks Business First to help support local businesses during this exceptionally difficult time. Here are some of the programmes available:

Peer Networks Programme

This is a new programme for Business Leaders designed to support them and their businesses with post COVID-19 recovery and future resilience in these unprecedented times.

These free-to-attend sessions, funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and delivered by Buckinghamshire Business First, will see small groups working collaboratively through common business challenges, gaining valuable feedback and implementing practical solutions. The programme is perfect to help overcome obstacles to business growth, find new opportunities and build a trusted network of connections to support and improve long term personal and business performance.

The Peer Networks Programme will consist of facilitator-led groups, meeting online fortnightly for 2hr sessions over a period of 9 weeks delivering 18hrs of learning in total. Individual coaching will also be available.

This is a great opportunity for individuals and businesses in these challenging times. For more information please go to the Bucks Business First website link below.

<https://bbf.uk.com/business-support/peer-networks>

Other support available to businesses include:

Restart Grants

The government has recently announced packages of support for small and medium size businesses, and for the tourism and hospitality sector to help these businesses get back on track. These grants will be available later this month. Please get businesses explore the Bucks Business First website to express their interest in these.

<https://bbf.uk.com/forms/restart-grant>

Redundancy Support

Buckinghamshire Business First is working with partners to support both employers and individuals through this tough time, including helping people find a new job, training opportunities and financial support. Visit bbf.uk.com/redundancy-support. I am also pleased to announce that our skills team is growing and we now have a new Workplace Skills Manager – John Browning who joined us last month. John is available to support businesses

with any skills and workplace needs. For more information contact John at John.Browning@buckskillshub.org

Please do get in touch if you are interested in finding out more about any of the above or visit the website at <https://bbf.uk.com/> for further details.

Planning Pre-application Guidance

I have been contacted by several residents recently in regards to whether some of their projects might require planning permission. Residents might not be aware that there is a service in the Aylesbury Vale area which allows for them to state their proposed project and obtain guidance from a planning officer. This might help residents to avoid inadvertently falling foul of planning laws they may not be aware of, and inform them in advance of useful planning information relating to their proposed project.

The link for this is below and there is a fee attached, but it may well be worth it for residents who want to avoid any surprises later in the process.

<https://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/section/pre-application-advice>

Proud of Bucks Heroes Awards

I am pleased to say that nominations are now open for Buckinghamshire Council's Proud of Bucks Awards. The new awards aim to recognise and applaud the outstanding efforts carried out by many local individuals, groups and organisations in direct response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Members of the public are invited to nominate a person, group or organisation who they feel deserves recognition and praise. There are 12 award categories:

- Community Hero
- Young Community Hero
- Collaboration Award
- Best Neighbour
- Local Community Impact Award
- Education Hero
- Health and Social Care Service Hero
- Food and Necessities Industry Hero
- Public Services Hero
- Best Local Business Innovation
- Best Employer
- Business Community Champion

Nominations can be made [online](#). Postal entries will also be accepted. The closing date is [midnight on Sunday 27 September](#).

Leader of Buckinghamshire Council, Martin Tett said: “We know there are so many people out there who have dedicated themselves to helping support others during this pandemic. The volume and breadth of their efforts must be recognised and rewarded in some way and so we have created our Proud of Bucks awards to do just that.

“Whether you have directly benefited from an initiative in your local area or you know someone who has wowed you with their efforts, enthusiasm and innovation, we want to hear from you.”

Nominations will be reviewed by a panel of judges and the winners will be announced in early November.

The Proud of Bucks Awards are being sponsored by The Clare Foundation. Martin Gallagher, CEO, said: “We are really pleased to be sponsoring these awards. We’ve seen so many wonderful examples of community spirit and enterprise in the past six months with people going above and beyond to support those most in need. We are looking forward to congratulating the winners on their efforts and giving them the praise they rightfully deserve.”

More information on the awards including further details of the criteria for each category and the full terms and conditions can be found on our [website](#). If you do not have access to the internet and would like to nominate someone by phone please call: [0300 131 6000](tel:03001316000).