Press Release from Buckinghamshire Council - 29 January 2021

COVID-19 vaccine - think before you share

Buckinghamshire Council is urging residents to think and check before they share information online about the COVID-19 vaccine. While many posts on social media and other channels tell positive stories about peoples' experiences, there is a large amount of misinformation about the vaccine spreading online.

It's essential to get any information about the COVID-19 vaccine from a reliable source, such as the NHS or Government's websites. It's also really important that people are aware of the **following facts** about the COVID-19 vaccine:

- It has been through the same strict safety checks that all vaccines go through
- The vaccine is suitable for vegetarians and vegans. It does not contain any animal products or egg and imams have stated the vaccines are halal
- Any side effects are mild other than in extremely rare cases – as is the case with all vaccines and medicines
- You cannot get COVID-19 from having the vaccine – it contains no live virus and cannot cause infection
- The COVID-19 vaccine offers the best possible protection from COVID-19, which carries significant health risks if you catch it

Thinking before sharing something on social media that could be potentially harmful or misleading is key and the advice is to take 5 seconds to consider:

- If it's a rumour, don't send it on
- Check the facts and get information from trusted sources
- Ask yourself, how does the person who's sent this know it's true?

Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire Council said:

"Of course having the vaccine is a matter of personal choice, but it's critical we all do our bit to avoid a situation where someone refuses a vaccine as they've ended up seeing misinformation about it online. We have a collective responsibility to make sure any information we share online about the vaccine is true and accurate. The vaccine is safe, it's been through the same rigorous programme of checks that all vaccines go through, and it categorically does not contain any animal or egg products. It's essential that people can make a fully informed decision about whether to have this vaccine. It's also crucial that as many people choose to have the vaccine as possible as it's currently our main route out of this pandemic."

Notes to Editor

- You can find out more about the COVID-19 vaccine and the vaccination programme in Buckinghamshire via our website at www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/covid-vaccine
- You can read more about the COVID-19 vaccine on the NHS website at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus-vaccination
- Nearly 190,000 people in our region (Bucks, Oxon and Berks) have now received their COVID-19 vaccine (this includes first and second doses). The vaccine programme in Buckinghamshire is being rolled out by the NHS and the aim is that all Buckinghamshire residents in the top four priority groups will have been offered a vaccine through their GP by the middle of February