

Bus lane fines could drop by 80 per cent

ESSEX County Council says services paid for by bus lane fines will have to be reviewed, after anticipating an 80 per cent drop off in the amount it takes from bus lane enforcement.

Over three months, the council will see income from bus lane fines drop by £700,000.

If the restrictions last six months, it will be down £1.4 million.

Essex Highways continues to enforce bus lanes and bus gates, but traffic data has shown a drop off in journeys.

On Tuesday, March 25, the day after the Prime Minister's lockdown announcement, traffic was down 53 per cent compared to the same time last year.

A statement to cabinet said: "It is proposed that the three month income pressure (£2.7 million) be funded from the general fund pending the government determination of emergency funding with any surplus being returned if the actual pressure crystallises below the stated amounts."

Students 'not prepared to say goodbye' on last school day



Epping St John's C of E School held an impromptu leavers party on their last day at school

THE prom was postponed and sixth formers said an emotional goodbye to their classmates after coronavirus brought the school year to an abrupt end.

Epping St John's Church of England School Sixth Form, in Epping, was forced to close suddenly due to the outbreak, along with the rest of the country's schools. With weeks of the school year left, Year 13 students will not only now miss out on taking their A-level exams, but also planned trips and celebrations.

The sixth form prom was rearranged for September, but teachers rallied to give students the best send-off they could under the circumstances.

Flora Christofi, head of sixth form, said: "We managed to put together a sixth form leavers assembly and a pizza party for students on the last day."

"It was a realisation for students that their time at Epping St John's had come to an abrupt and unexpected end. Some have been with us for seven years and so they were not prepared to say goodbye. It was an emotional last day."

"However, being together and celebrating for the last time definitely gave them comfort and positivity when thinking about the future."

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Message service for patients in hospital

Charity steps in after visitors banned from wards

By Lewis Berrill

A CHARITY is delivering messages to patients from their loved ones who cannot visit hospitals due to coronavirus restrictions on visitors.

Patients at The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust (PAHT) are now able to receive messages of support from friends and family thanks to a partnership with the Anne Robson Trust.

As the NHS manages the demands of Covid-19, visiting to the hospital in Hamstel Road, Harlow, has been restricted.

No visitors are permitted, except in exceptional circumstances by agreement with the nurse in charge.

At the children's ward, one parent or carer only is allowed, and one birthing partner only with no other visitors is permitted at the maternity department.

The Anne Robson Trust, a partner charity of the hospital, is supporting the Trust to provide the Message to a Loved One service.



The Anne Robson Trust is delivering messages from patients' loved ones

Photo: Unsplash

sage to patients from their loved ones.

Shahid Sardar, associate director of patient engagement, said: "We appreciate the understanding of our community as we work to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our patients and people by restricting visiting to our hospital. We recognise that keeping in touch with loved ones is a vital aspect of holistic support for our patients and we encourage family members and friends to contact them via phone and video calls during this time."

"In addition, the Message to a Loved One service is an important way that friends and relatives can show patients that they are thinking about them during their hospital stay. We are extremely grateful to The Anne Robson Trust for generously giving their time to offer this service for our patients."

The service is currently only available for patients to receive messages, and there is not the capacity for messages to be returned at this time.

The number for the dedicated phone line is 01279 868128.

Family members and friends of inpatients can send a personal message or collate messages and send to paht.message@nhs.net.

Additionally, there is a dedicated phone line, which is available between 10am and 12noon each weekday and a staff member or volunteer will write the message down and get the mes-