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## FAO: UK Supermarket CEOs

### **CONTROLLING COVID-19 IN SURREY**

We are writing to seek your support and urgent action to help our communities effectively tackle the latest and forecast surge in the Covid-19 pandemic, towards it being finally under control.

Our data, much like other parts of the country, show an alarming rise in cases, hospitalisation and deaths. The situation is currently and is projected to be in the next few weeks, much worse than March 2020. All our frontline services, including our hospitals, have reached a critical point and we need your help.

Despite the clear, consistent and ubiquitous communication regarding the measures that will prove effective in controlling the virus, saving lives and protecting the NHS, we see on our streets and in our communities, so much less compliance and cautious behaviour, including I have to say in many of our leading supermarkets, **especially the smaller branches at the very local level.**

We know from the 'Common exposure reports' that shopping is one of the key areas of concern, being a common activity reported by those who have had a positive test (from national test and trace data).

It would seem that many of the secure systems and compliance measures put in place by yourselves in March (e.g. monitor and limiting customer numbers in stores) just aren't in place or are not being managed properly by the responsible storeowners at this time, again, more often it appears at smaller, local branches. Whilst we will ensure that enforcement activity takes place the reality is we do not have the resources to be everywhere and policing is undertaken by consent of the public, therefore we need you to lead the right behaviours need right now to save more lives in our communities.

We do appreciate the economic impact this is having and will have on trading, but we are firmly of the belief that such measures assertively implemented and effectively enforced now will have the benefit of better controlling the spread of the virus, at a time when vaccinations are being rolled-out at scale, thereby hastening the moment when we will all collectively be able to return to our more normal daily lives.

Therefore, I would urge you in the strongest possible terms to do and demonstrate that you are doing everything possible to ensure that you and your colleagues - the important anchor institutions of so many of our High Streets and local communities - do all that you can to tighten restrictions, implement measures and enforce them effectively, if necessary beyond the requirements laid down by Government, to help us limit the spread of Covid-19 and bring it under control at the earliest opportunity.

The current Government guidance can be found using this link:

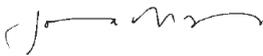
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/shops-and-branches>

The following will help reduce the spread of the virus:

- all customers wearing a properly fitting face mask **at all times** (unless exempt for health reasons)
- people are not allowed to enter without a face mask
- the number of shoppers allowed in stores at any one time is controlled to enable safe, social distancing **at all times**
- only one person per household should be allowed in stores at any one time
- that social distancing is adhered to and enforced in store **at all times**
- regular announcements in store to remind shoppers of public health advice and the need to remain socially distanced]

We will be writing to the Government in a similar vein on a range of issues that the Surrey Local Resilience Forum believes need to be addressed and strengthened to fight the virus more effectively.

Yours sincerely



Joanna Killian  
Chief Executive,  
Surrey County Council



Gavin Stephens  
Chief Constable  
Surrey Police



Steve Owen-Hughes  
Chair of Surrey Local Resilience Forum  
Chief Fire Officer  
Surrey Fire and Rescue Service

**Joint Chairs of the Surrey Strategic Coordination Group**