



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 2020

## **Supermarket hygiene during Coronavirus outbreak**

Constituents have contacted me to register concern about hygiene in supermarkets at a time when this is all-important. I agree that supermarkets should be maintaining good hygiene and cleanliness. It is important that customers who are doing their essential shopping, and are unable to shop online, feel safe to shop in supermarkets.

While measures that we as individuals take continue to be important – for example, washing our hands regularly and avoiding contact with our face - supermarkets are constantly reviewing their safety procedures.

I understand, for example, that some supermarket branches have started giving shoppers wipes to wipe their trollies. They have also put in place queue control methods, limiting the number of shoppers inside and provided markers for shoppers to queue both outside the shop and while waiting at a checkout. Some supermarkets, such as Aldi and Tesco, have erected plastic barriers at checkouts, to protect shoppers and staff. These measures are being phased in and therefore do vary from store to store.

As the virus is spread through droplets, keeping 2 metres apart from other shoppers remains a key method of stemming the flow of the virus. Sainsbury's, Aldi and Tesco are asking shoppers to send only one person per household to limit numbers. Physical contact with food products is unavoidable, but it is important that shoppers avoid touching their faces while shopping and wash their hands as soon as they are home. It is also crucial to wash hands before and after preparing a meal.

Supermarkets have said they will continue to monitor the fast-moving situation and, if necessary, will introduce stricter hygiene and safety controls as part of the crucial part that they are playing in tackling the pandemic and working towards a new normal.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Conor Burns', with a horizontal line underneath.