

Meetings and Office Use (including Covid-19)

Reviewed 17/1/22
 APPROVED 20/1/22

Covid-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus and can affect lungs and airways. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal. The Government has passed legislation allowing for limits on gatherings and social contact and these must be adhered to, including when attending meetings of the Parish Council. Currently most restrictions no longer apply in England Further details and guidance is available from <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Hazard	Who at risk of harm	Controls	Additional Notes / Comments
<p>Spread of Covid-19</p> <p>Coronavirus MEETINGS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors • Council Staff • Members of the public attending • Subsequent hirers and visitors to the premises where meetings are held • Vulnerable groups – Elderly, Pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions 	<p>Infection Control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendees to be made aware that, regardless of vaccination status, they must not attend if they have the symptoms of coronavirus (unless they have a confirmed negative PCR test from within the last 24 hours) or have been required or advised to self-isolate in respect of coronavirus exposure, or have a positive LFT. - Face coverings must be worn (unless exempt) worn. Attendees will be encouraged to bring their own PPE. - Hand hygiene to be encouraged and sanitiser made available. <p>Lateral Flow Testing (LFT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If possible WTC would request that all councillors and staff should undertake LFT ahead before attending any council meeting / meeting on behalf of the council 	<p>Post 6 May 2021 the council is required to meet face-to-face for council and committee meetings.</p> <p>Council meetings are considered a business activity for the purposes of government restrictions and may meet without number limitation provided that any social distancing requirements are adhered to.</p> <p>On 09 December 2021 the government announced moving to Plan B from 13 December, as a result of rising cases of the new Omicron variant.</p> <p>Face coverings are again required in most public settings. Those with a valid exemption need not wear a mask.</p> <p>Isolating rules for contacts of Omicron cases have changed.</p>

Hazard	Who at risk of harm	Controls	Additional Notes / Comments
		<p>Social distancing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtual meetings to be used where possible to do so. - Councillors and staff should sit at least 1m apart. - Members of the public will be asked to sit at a distance of 2m + from councillors / staff and each other (unless a household group). - Seating arrangements to avoid face to face seating (less than 2m apart) where possible. - One-way flow to be implemented, if possible. - Public to be excluded where social distancing above cannot be facilitated (remote access to be facilitated) <p>Cleaning / Sanitising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hand sanitiser to be used on entry to the building provided by WTC - The Council Chamber is cleaned by contractors twice a week and the conditions of hire require that users clean after use. 	

Hazard	Who at risk of harm	Controls	Additional Notes / Comments
		<p>Minimising Numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public access is permitted provided notification is given to the Town Clerk of the individuals attendance. Where possible it is recommended that meetings are held remotely. Physical attendance is only facilitated in line with the up to date guidance any attendance limits of the venue and practical space limitations. <p>Ventilation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Windows and doors to remain open to allow airflow unless weather conditions are unsuitable (fire doors not to be propped open). <p>Use of Equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All desks to be wiped down after use - Only necessary equipment should be handled. <p>Record Keeping / Track and Trace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk to report to the Mayor any subsequent covid symptoms / diagnosed cases in attendees within 10 days of attending. - Use of the NHS app and Council Chamber QR code to be encouraged. 	<p>Should the Clerk and the Town Mayor identify that satisfactory social distancing cannot be achieved the location of the meeting will be moved in order to facilitate councillor and public safety. This will be subject to availability.</p>

Hazard	Who at risk of harm	Controls	Additional Notes / Comments
<p>Spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus OFFICE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors • Council Staff – WTC/FDC/CC • Members of the public attending • Groups using the Council Chamber • 	<p>An LFT should be undertaken before any office attendance.</p> <p>Public access to the Clerk will be via the reception, no access to the Clerks office is permitted. Only two people at any one permitted in the reception area. Masks to be worn.</p> <p>Hand Hygiene to be implemented by staff and mask wearing while on site.</p> <p>Councillors must make appointments to attend the office to visit the Clerk</p>	<p>WTC only have one member of staff and therefore the Clerk can continue to work from the office but will need to regularly take LV tests.</p>
<p>Fire</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors • Council Staff • Members of the public attending • Other Chamber users • Commercial Tenants 	<p>Staff to be familiar with the Council Chamber fire plan.</p> <p>Staff to be familiar with the location of extinguishers.</p> <p>Fire alarm to be sounded in the event of smoke of fire being seen.</p> <p>Electrical equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electrical equipment should be subject to pat testing at an appropriate frequency. - Plug sockets should not be overloaded. - Liquids to be kept away from electrical outlets and equipment. 	<p>WTC are responsible for PAT testing all of their equipment and that of the commercial tenants.</p> <p>The Council Chamber and offices are no smoking throughout.</p>

Hazard	Who at risk of harm	Controls	Additional Notes / Comments
		<p>No naked flames and no smoking on premises.</p> <p>Evacuation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings to be evacuated in the event of the alarm sounding (unless pre-notified testing) or fire or smoke being observed. Attendees should be encouraged to leave belongings and evacuate promptly. - Staff to be familiar with fire exit locations and exit routes. - Fire exits and walkways to be kept clear of obstructions. - No one to re-enter until all clear from Fire Brigade or WTC representative. <p>Staff should not attempt to extinguish fires themselves where to do so would put them at increased risk of harm.</p> <p>Meetings in the Banking house only to take place downstairs.</p>	
<p>Slips / Trips</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors • Council Staff • Members of the public attending 	<p>Walkways to be kept clear of obstructions.</p> <p>Staff to assess the area on arrival and monitor throughout event.</p> <p>Spills to be cleaned and signed as appropriate.</p>	

Risk assessment dated: 4th January 2022