

24<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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## **Risk assessment and procedures for COVID 10 working from 24 March 2020**

**Covid-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal.**

This is a risk assessment, method statement and modified procedures to be followed following the UK Government restrictions imposed from 23/3/2020 on all persons in the UK., based on a **generic Risk Assessment** for dealing with the current Covid-19 situation in the workplace from the HS&E. To keep up to date with HSE advice to workplaces in this fast changing situation visit <https://www.hseni.gov.uk/news/coronavirus-covid-19-and-hseni-contact-details-updateo>

### **Statement of Government Restrictions from 23/3/2020**

The UK Government has defined how all of us must currently stay at home, stipulating that persons should only leave the house for very limited purposes such as shopping for basic necessities, one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household, to provide care or to help a vulnerable person and travelling for work purposes, but only where you cannot work from home. Even when undertaking these activities, please ensure that time spent outside of the home is limited, and ensure that you are 2 metres apart from anyone outside of your household.

### **Revised Watchet Town Council Procedures adopted at EGM 24/3/2020**

Revised working arrangements were adopted as follows, with the council operating in contingency mode

#### **CONTINGENCY PLAN**

**All actions contained within this plan are subject to changes in Government Guidelines**

<b>DETAILS</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>ACTIONED</b>
<i>Adopt resolution for 'Continuity of Council Business'</i>	<i>Extraordinary Meeting – 24 March 2020</i>	<i>24 March 2020</i>
<i>Agree to Staff working from home from 1 April for an indefinite period</i>	<i>F&amp;GP Committee agreed to facilitate this at the meeting on 16 March 2020</i>	<i>From 24 March 2020</i>
<i>Agree to Employers flexibility in staff members who have contracted COVID 19 producing a sick note if sick longer than the 7 days of self-certification</i>	<i>F&amp;GP Committee agreed to facilitate this at the meeting on 16 March 2020</i>	<i>From the date when a staff member is off sick</i>
<i>Agree to postpone: 1. Council and Committee meetings for April , waiting on government guidelines on the Annual Council meeting in May as this is subject to legislation</i>		

<p>2. Annual Town Meeting on 21 April 2020</p> <p>3. Library Re-dedication Event – May 5<sup>th</sup> 2020</p> <p>4. Contact all event organisers who have been given permission to use the Esplanade, outlining guidelines on ‘social distancing’ and to use their discretion on cancellation or postponement</p>	<p>Via email consensus to be approved at the first convened meeting</p>	<p>24 March 2020</p>
<p>Put a statement in the public domain outlining Councils contingency plan for COVID 19:</p> <p>1. details to contact council staff, assure residents Council services still operating</p> <p>2. Signpost residents to information sites, such as NHS and Public Health England</p> <p>3. Display attached posters in public areas in Council ownership</p> <p>4. Working together with a Community Action group in a joint effort to ensure the vulnerable adults and elderly population in isolation are protected and safe</p> <p>Closure of Harbour Road Toilets</p>	<p>Via email consensus to be approved at the first convened meeting</p>	<p>24 March 2020</p>

### **Resolution to Watchet Town Council on Business Continuity**

In light of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and government advice, Watchet Town Council resolves that:

(a) The Council choose to suspend meetings for an indefinite period, and will resume when advised by Government. The Clerk is given delegated authority to progress all ongoing matters and projects and authorise all regular payments and incur expenditure in line with the Council’s agreed budget.

(b) Any decisions taken under resolution (a) above will be taken, whenever possible, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council and the relevant Committee Chairman (if appropriate). A record of all decisions and expenditure incurred under delegated authority will be kept and reported to members when the Council next meets.

(c) The authority to decide the Council’s response to planning applications is delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Environment & Planning Committee and Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council. Whenever possible, members of the Environment & Planning Committee will be informed of applications out for consultation and will be invited to submit comments to the Clerk.

(d) The provisions outlined in resolutions (a-c) above will override any requirements to the contrary in the Council’s Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Terms of Reference for Committees and Scheme of Delegation.

(e) In the interest of Council staff and public safety the Council Office will be closed to the public, except by appointment, whenever government advice deems this to be appropriate.

(f) In line with government advice, Office staff will be encouraged to work from home and provisions should be put in place to facilitate this.



## Risk assessment for Office, home and ground staff working

Risk assessment for working during this period are additional to existing procedures and risk assessments for WTC activities.

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed	Controls Required	Additional Controls	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Spread of Covid-19 Coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Staff</b></li> <li>• <b>Visitors to your premises</b></li> <li>• <b>Cleaners</b></li> <li>• <b>Contractors</b></li> <li>• <b>Drivers</b></li> <li>• <b>Vulnerable groups – Elderly, Pregnant workers, those with existing underlying health conditions</b></li> <li>• <b>Anyone else who physically comes in contact with you in relation to your business</b></li> </ul>	<p><u>Hand Washing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand washing facilities with soap and hot water in place.</li> <li>• Stringent hand washing taking place.</li> <li>• Paper towels/hand dyers for drying of hands</li> <li>• See hand washing guidance.</li> <li>• <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/">https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/</a></li> <li>• Gel sanitisers in any area where washing facilities not readily available</li> </ul>	<p>Employees to be reminded on a regular basis to wash their hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap and the importance of proper drying. Also reminded to catch coughs and sneezes in tissues – Follow Catch it, Bin it, kill it and to avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth with unclean hands. Tissues will be made available throughout the workplace.</p> <p>To help reduce the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) reminding everyone of the public health advice - <a href="https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus">https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus</a></p> <p>Posters, leaflets and other materials are available for display.</p>	SR	24/3/2020	Y

		<p><b>Cleaning</b></p> <p>Frequently cleaning and disinfecting objects and surfaces that are touched regularly particularly in areas of high use such as door handles, light switches, reception area using appropriate cleaning products and methods.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19</a></p>	SR	24/3/2020	Y
		<p><b>Social Distancing</b></p> <p>Social Distancing -Reducing the number of persons in any work area to comply with the 2-metre (6.5 foot) gap recommended by the Public Health Agency</p> <p><a href="https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus">https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/news/covid-19-coronavirus</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people</a></p>	<p>Rigorous checks will be carried out by line managers to ensure that the necessary procedures are being followed.</p>	SR	24/3/2020	Y
			<p>Staff to be reminded on a daily basis of the importance of social distancing both in the workplace and outside of it.</p> <p>Management checks to ensure this is adhered to.</p>			

		<p>Taking steps to review work schedules including start &amp; finish times/shift patterns, working from home etc. to reduce number of workers on site at any one time. Also relocating workers to other tasks.</p> <p>Redesigning processes to ensure social distancing in place.</p> <p>Conference calls to be used instead of face to face meetings.</p> <p>Ensuring sufficient rest breaks for staff.</p> <p>Social distancing also to be adhered to in canteen area and smoking area.</p> <p><b><u>Wearing of Gloves</u></b></p> <p>Where Risk Assessment identifies wearing of gloves as a requirement of the job, an adequate supply of these will be provided. Staff will be instructed on how to remove gloves</p>		SR/NW/PF	24/3/2020	Y
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		<p>carefully to reduce contamination and how to dispose of them safely.</p> <p><b><u>RPE (Respiratory)</u></b></p> <p><i>Public Health guidance on the use of PPE (personal protective equipment) to protect against COVID-19 relates to health care settings. In all other settings individuals are asked to observe social distancing measures and practice good hand hygiene behaviours</i></p> <p>Where RPE is a requirement for risks associated with the work undertaken the following measures will be followed-</p> <p>Tight-fitting respirators (such as disposable FFP3 masks and reusable half masks) rely on having a good seal with the wearer's face. A face fit test will be carried out to ensure the</p>	<p>Note: RPE may be required under other procedures for grounds maintenance, which continues, but not for COVID 19 protection in a health care environment.</p> <p>Staff to be reminded that wearing of gloves is not a substitute for good hand washing.</p> <p>To minimise the risk of transmission of COVID-19 during face-fit testing the following additional measures should be carried out –</p>	<p>Not applicable</p> <p>N/A</p>		
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		<p>respiratory protective equipment (RPE) can protect the wearer.</p> <p>Wearers must be clean shaven.</p> <p><b><u>Symptoms of Covid-19</u></b></p> <p>If anyone becomes unwell with a new continuous cough or a high temperature in the workplace, they will be sent home and advised to follow the stay at home guidance.</p> <p>Line managers will maintain regular contact with staff members during this time.</p>	<p>Both the fit tester and those being fit tested should wash their hands before and after the test.</p> <p>Those being fit tested with non-disposable masks should clean the mask themselves before and immediately after the test using a suitable disinfectant cleaning wipe (check with manufacturer to avoid damaging the mask).</p> <p>Test face pieces that cannot be adequately disinfected (e.g. disposable half masks) should not be used by more than one individual.</p> <p>Fit testers should wear disposable gloves when undertaking cleaning of the tubes, hoods etc. and ensure they remove gloves following the correct procedure (PDF)</p> <p>Reference <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/face-mask-ppe-rpe-coronavirus.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/face-mask-ppe-rpe-coronavirus.htm</a></p> <p>Internal communication channels and cascading of messages through line managers will be carried out regularly to reassure and support employees in a fast-changing situation.</p>	ALL	24/3/2020	Y
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		<p>If advised that a member of staff or public has developed Covid-19 and were recently on our premises (including where a member of staff has visited other work place premises such as domestic premises), the management team of the workplace will contact the Public Health Authority to discuss the case, identify people who have been in contact with them and will take advice on any actions or precautions that should be taken. <a href="https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/">https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/</a></p> <p><b><u>Drivers</u></b></p> <p>Procedures in place for Drivers to ensure adequate welfare facilities available during their work - Reference <a href="https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/drivers-transport-delivery-coronavirus.htm">https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/drivers-transport-delivery-coronavirus.htm</a></p> <p>COVID-19-guidance on freight transport.</p>	<p>Line managers will offer support to staff who are affected by Coronavirus or has a family member affected.</p> <p>Primarily related to driving to and from places of work and driving WTC vehicles for undertaking maintenance work.</p>	SR	24/3/2020	Y
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		<p>Persons should not share vehicles or cabs, where suitable distancing cannot be achieved.</p> <p><b><u>Mental Health</u></b></p> <p>Management will promote mental health &amp; wellbeing awareness to staff during the Coronavirus outbreak and will offer whatever support they can to help</p> <p>Reference -</p> <p><a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/">https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.hseni.gov.uk/stress">www.hseni.gov.uk/stress</a></p>	<p>Communicate with companies we deliver to/from to ensure welfare facilities will be available to our drivers. Allowing delivery drivers adequate breaks to avail of proper welfare facilities.</p> <p>Regular communication of mental health information and open-door policy for those who need additional support.</p>	SR	1/4/2020	
	Office staff	Office – work at home	Apply similar hygiene and working arrangements as for office wherever possible.	SR	1/4/2020	Y

	Grounds staff  & public	Ground staff – key grounds and buildings maintenance, cemetery + emergency cover	<p>Ensure employees work alone i.e. individually wherever possible, following lone working procedure with contact telephone numbers and periodic checks with supervisor/manager. Where two-person working is required, maintain social distancing min 2 metre distance.</p> <p>Maintain social distance with any members of the public encountered.</p> <p>Ensure adequate hand washing facilities available only to staff e.g. Memorial Ground and Cemetery toilet/Washing facilities</p>	SR	1/4/2020	Y
	Members	Council members	<p>Working from home with meetings suspended. Use telephone, conferencing as appropriate</p>	SR	24/3/2020	Y
	All	All	Ongoing review of these procedures and risk assessment	SR?JI	Weekly or as needed	