

Guildhall Covid-19 Physical Face to Face Council Meetings Risk Assessment

This is a fast moving issue and should be read as correct at the time of writing it.

All meetings of Saltash Town Council, its committees, sub committees or any other meeting held under the 1972 Local Government Act Sch 12 10 must be held as a physical, face to face meeting from 7th May 2021.

Covid-19 is a new illness that is currently known to affect your lungs and airways. It is caused by a virus called Coronavirus. Symptoms can be mild, moderate, severe or fatal. Further to this Covid-19 viruses constantly change and mutate when they reproduce themselves. The latest Omicron variant has multiple mutations to its spike protein, which is found on the virus's surface. The spike protein plays a role in infecting cells. There are concerns that the mutations could make it harder for people's immune systems to fight off the variant.

This **Risk Assessment** is designed for dealing with the current Covid-19 situation in the workplace (Saltash Town Council) and while carrying out 1:1 interviews with Officers of the Council and if required an online Councillors Briefing Session can be arranged but it is not likely to cover all scenarios and Officers and Councillors attending should consider their own unique circumstances. To keep up to date with the latest guidance to workplaces and Covid-19 in this fast changing situation please visit the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres>

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

All Councillors, Council Officers and members of the public are to read and familiarise themselves with the risk assessment together with the protocol. Councillors and members of the public to contact the Acting Town Clerk with areas of concern and Council Officers to contact their line manager.

Company Name: Saltash Town Council

Assessment carried out by: Acting Town Clerk

Date assessment was carried out: 4th January 2022

Review Date: 31st January 2022

Method of Scoring Risk Assessments

The following shows how the risk of each hazard is scored. Probability x Severity = Risk rating, where any score of 16 or above is deemed unacceptable.

SEVERITY is the degree of harm to people that could arise from a hazard being realised.

The Council Chamber identifies areas of risk therefore safety measures are to be implemented to manage and reduce the spread of the virus.

The Council Chamber public gallery is to be reduced to 6 people (1m socially distanced). At any time, the maximum identified capacity for public attendance has been reached, no further entry will be allowed.

		SEVERITY				
PROBABILITY	P x S	Minor 1	Moderate 2	Significant 3	Serious 4	Major 5
	Rare	1	2	3	4	5
	Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
	Possible	3	6	9	12	15
	Likely	4	8	12	16	20
	Almost Certain	5	10	15	20	25
	Risk Level	=	Low 1-5	Medium 6-10	High 11-15	Very High 16-25

<u>Risk Rating</u>			
Probability (1 to 5)	X	Severity (1 to 5)	= Risk Rating (1 to 25)

Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Attendance generally	Highly vulnerable categories / those not vaccinated attending Council meetings	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Those in highly vulnerable categories are recommended not to attend meetings</p> <p>The Council Chamber has a maximum Covid safe working seating capacity of 24 people. At any time, the maximum identified capacity for public attendance has been reached, no further entry will be allowed</p> <p>Anyone displaying symptoms, tested positive, or returned from abroad in the last 14 days</p>	3	4	12	Everyone attending Council meeting(s)

Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Covid symptoms	Person(s) presenting with continuous cough, difficulty breathing, temperature and loss of taste and / or smell	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Any person(s) experiencing Covid-19 symptoms not to enter the Guildhall Building</p> <p>Councillors to give their apologies</p> <p>Officers to report their absence to their line manager</p> <p>Anyone falling ill with symptoms during attendance at Council meetings will be requested to leave and medical attention sought</p> <p>Any person(s) encouraged to take a lateral flow test prior to attending Council meetings to ensure they are not carrying the virus (preferably an hour before the meeting)</p>	3	4	12	Everyone attending Council meeting(s)

Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Room capacity	Council Chamber does not accommodate social distancing therefore presents a risk	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>All Council meetings to be held in the Council Chamber due to the poor acoustics in the Guildhall (long room). To be reviewed on 31st January 2022 in line with the latest Government directive</p> <p>Councillors declaring an interest must leave the room wearing a face covering (unless medically exempt) and wait in reception</p> <p>Social distancing is not achievable due to lack of available space. Individual desks and protective screens purchased to mitigate the risk where social distancing is not viable</p> <p>Council Chamber does not lend well to change of layout. Opposite desk more than 2m separation to mitigate the risk</p> <p>Public gallery chairs to be spaced at 1m members of the public to remain wearing a face covering to mitigate the risk where 2m is not viable</p>	1	2	2	<p>Service Delivery Manager / Assistant Service Delivery Manager/ Service Delivery Department / on duty Casual Caretaker</p> <p>Everyone attending Council meeting(s)</p>

			<p>Tables, chairs and screens not to be moved during meeting(s)</p> <p>Automatic hand sanitiser available within the Council Chamber room and reception area</p>				
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Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Transmission of Virus Contract Tracing	Airborne particulates Surface based viral material	Everyone attending Council meeting(s)	<p>All persons must wear a face covering unless medically exempt when entering/exiting the building and in communal areas. Councillors can remove face covering once seated, members of the public <u>must</u> continue to wear a face covering at all times</p> <p>Automatic hand sanitiser dispenser in place to be used by persons on arrival</p> <p>QR Code scanned immediately on arrival</p> <p>Register held for 21 days for those not able to use QR Code</p> <p>Those who are fully vaccinated and are identified as a contact of someone with Covid-19 are strongly advised to take a rapid lateral flow test every day for 7 days or until 10 days since the last contact with the person who tested positive (if this is earlier) and continue to attend your setting as normal,</p>	3	3	9	Everyone attending Council meeting(s)

			<p>unless you have a positive result, if tested positive stay at home and immediately inform the Acting Town Clerk</p> <p>Those who are not fully vaccinated are legally required to stay at home and self-isolate if informed by NHS Test and Trace that you are a contact of a person who has had a positive test result for Covid-19 and to immediately inform the Acting Town Clerk</p> <p>Notices displayed around the building reminding of 'hands / face/ space'</p> <p>Hard copy agendas and reports will <u>not</u> be available at the meeting</p> <p>Agendas and reports to be accessed via Civica – Modern.gov / Town Council website</p> <p>Councillors to bring their own writing materials which must be taken home at the end of the meeting</p>				
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			<p>Councillors <u>not</u> to share paperwork or pens, take home and destroy</p> <p>Windows and doors should always be open when the Council Chamber is occupied. The amount of opening is weather dependent; in windy conditions less aperture is necessary to maintain airflow.</p> <p>Additional purging by fully opening windows for 10 minutes when convenient (after use or during a break) will assist refreshing the room and reduce the risk of catching or spreading covid-19.</p> <p>The more fresh air let into the room, the less likely a person is to inhale infectious particles</p> <p>All persons to wear extra layers to help keep warm</p> <p>Use of kitchen facilities prohibited, all persons to bring their own refreshments and take home when leaving</p>				
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			<p>Ground floor fully accessible toilet to be available but please be mindful the Guildhall building is a place of work for Town Council Officers</p> <p>Town Council, committee and sub-committee agendas to be scaled back where possible and more focused to reduce the length of time in the room with people you do not live with indoors</p>				
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Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Social Distancing Generally	<p>Attendees congregate and mingle</p> <p>Social distancing is not a Government requirement however Public Health England confirm it is critical to socially distance to help reduce the spread of the virus</p>	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Councillors to follow the social distancing queuing system outside the Guildhall</p> <p>Limited number of people at entry and exit points of the Guildhall Building to two people at any one time to allow for social distancing rules to be maintained Councillors and members of the public and press to remain outside in an orderly fashion observing social distancing until it is safe to enter</p> <p>Everyone to respect each other's space and be mindful not everyone has been vaccinated and could be highly vulnerable</p> <p>Councillors to wear a face covering when engaging with the public gallery</p>	3	4	12	Everyone attending Council meeting(s)

Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
End of Council Meetings	Councillors congregate and mingle	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Mayor / Deputy Mayor / Chairman / Vice Chairman to remind all present to leave the meeting following the risk assessment</p> <p>Automatic hand sanitiser dispenser in place to be used by persons when leaving</p> <p>Face covering to be worn when leaving unless medically exempt</p> <p>Councillors to disperse after meeting and not to congregate</p>	2	2	4	Everyone attending Council meeting(s)

Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Council Officers	Not abiding by Covid secure measures	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Officers to adhere to the Covid-19 Risk Assessment at all times</p> <p>The Council Chamber has a maximum Covid safe working seating capacity of 24 people. At any time, the maximum identified capacity for public attendance has been reached, no further entry will be allowed</p> <p>Officers only attend meetings they Clerk, minute take, or for items they are required to be present for, then depart</p> <p>Officers to disperse after meeting and not congregate</p>	2	2	4	Officers in attendance / Acting Town Clerk / Line Managers

Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Public Participation	Congregate, mingle, do not follow Covid secure measures	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Only attend if absolutely necessary</p> <p>The Council Chamber has a maximum Covid safe working seating capacity of 24 people. At any time, the maximum identified capacity for public attendance has been reached, no further entry will be allowed</p> <p>Members of the public must wear a face covering at all times when entering/exiting the building and in communal areas unless medically exempt or addressing the Council</p> <p>Follow social distancing at all times</p> <p>Everyone to respect each other's space and be mindful not everyone has been vaccinated and could be highly vulnerable</p> <p>Remain seated for duration of the meeting</p>	2	2	4	Attendees

			<p>Toilet facilities prohibited unless absolutely necessary (ground floor fully accessible toilet)</p> <p>Hard copy agendas not provided, take any paperwork home with them and destroy</p> <p>Members of the public should disperse after the meeting and not congregate</p>				
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Area of activity	Hazard	Who is at risk	Controls	Probability	Severity	RR (Prob x Sev)	Person(s) Responsible
Cleaning	Not cleaned to required standards, risk of virus remaining present	Everyone attending Council meetings	<p>Follow non-clinical setting cleaning guidance</p> <p>Frequent cleaning of high touch areas</p> <p>Disinfect tables before and after meeting</p> <p>Use of fogging machine</p>	2	2	4	Service Delivery Manager / Assistant Service Delivery Manager / Service Delivery Department