

Great Notley Parish Council COVID-19 Risk Assessment regarding the holding of meetings.

The regulations allowing Parish Councils to meet online expired on 7th May 2021. The High Court confirmed that Parish Councils may only meet in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides that meetings must take place in one physical location.

This risk assessment is undertaken to enable the Parish Council to meet in a safe manner in order for the Parish Council to meet its duty of care in common law and statutory obligations in relation to Councillors, staff¹ and members of the public² and in accordance with any current Coronavirus restrictions imposed by the Government. Although certain restrictions will be eased as of 19th July 2021 the Parish Council wish to make sure that measures are in place for the meeting to ensure that the meeting remains as safe as is possible in all the circumstances even if they are over and above legal requirements.

Failure to comply with this risk assessment shall be considered disorderly conduct entitling the Chairman to exclude that person from the meeting in accordance with standing order 2.

In particular the Parish Council has considered the Governments requirements for use of multi-purpose community facilities <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-multi-purpose-community-facilities>

What are the hazards	Who might be harmed	issue	Description of risk	Control measures	Assessment and comments
Transmission of Covid-19 and risk of serious illness or death	Councilors, members of the public, staff	Setting up the hall	Transmission from setting out the chairs and equipment for the meeting	<p>The Notley Green Community Association (NGCA) confirm that tables and chairs will have been cleaned prior to the meeting. The hall will be set up by Councilors who shall immediately thereafter sanitize their hands.</p> <p>At the meeting antibacterial wipes will be made available for all to use to wipe tables and chairs as well</p> <p>Chairs to be set out in a horseshoe shape to avoid people facing each other</p>	<p>The Clerk and Chairman will require a table but it would be preferable for other Councilors not to use a table.</p> <p>Antibacterial wipes will be made available upon entry alongside the hand sanitizer</p>

¹ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent Regulations 1999

² Local Government Act 1972 and Admission to Meetings Act 1980

				<p>Tables only to be set up if specifically requested by members who will use the antibacterial wipes at the start and end of the meeting to wipe the tables</p> <p>The tables and chairs will be wiped with the antibacterial wipes prior to being put away by Councilors.</p>	To have a table upon entry for hand sanitizer, antibac wipes and QR code poster
Transmission of Covid-19 and risk of serious illness or death	Councilors and staff	Travelling to and from the meeting	Transmission through sharing transport both public and private	<p>Councilors and staff shall travel to and from the meeting separately and if using public transport shall follow any current Covid guidelines</p> <p>If a Councilor or staff attending the meeting parks in the car park to make sure that they park in a way to maintain social distancing from others</p>	
Transmission of Covid-19 and risk of serious illness or death	Councilors, staff and members of the public	Entering and leaving the meeting	Close proximity to others and contact with doors	<p>No person shall attend the meeting if they are suffering from Covid 19 or have the symptoms of Covid 19</p> <p>Entrance to the meeting shall be via the main door into the hall. Only one person at a time shall walk through the door and shall socially distance from others entering the hall</p> <p>No person shall linger around the entrance to the hall but shall enter promptly and take their seat as soon as possible</p> <p>To use the hand sanitizer that will be provided immediately upon entering the hall and before taking their seat</p>	This one-way system should assist with social distancing. The doors shall be kept open so that there is no contact with the handle.

				<p>Ensure compliance with Test and Trace requirements i.e., those with the NHS app must use the QR code or otherwise record their attendance in accordance with the venue's requirements (records to be kept for 21 days)</p> <p>Unless the individual is exempt, Facemasks shall be worn upon entry into the hall and thereafter at all times whilst inside the hall and may only be removed with the consent of the Chairman to address the meeting whilst seated.</p> <p>Those who wish to leave the meeting either during the meeting or at the end of the meeting shall leave via the side door to the hall. It shall be requested that people leave one by one so as to keep a distance from all others at the meeting. No person shall linger outside the hall in the vicinity of the door.</p> <p>To maintain social distancing at all times by keeping a minimum of 2 meters distance from all others present.</p>	
Transmission of Covid-19 and risk of serious illness or death	Councillors, members of the public, staff	Meeting environment	Transmission through air and touch	<p>The seating will be set up in a horseshoe shape so that no one will be sitting face to face</p> <p>A request shall be made as to whether any attendees are clinically vulnerable so that arrangements can be made for them to be seated as far away from other attendees as possible.</p>	<p>The large hall has been booked for the meetings in July September and October which will allow social distancing to take place.</p> <p>To ask NGCA that the doors and windows are kept open</p>

				<p>All those attending the meeting shall maintain a social distance of at least 2 meters in any direction from others in attendance.</p> <p>Windows and doors shall be left open to allow the free flow of air through the hall</p> <p>Masks shall be worn at all times unless the Chairman permits a person addressing the meeting to remove their mask whilst remaining seated.</p> <p>Those in attendance should refrain from shouting or unduly raising their voices.</p> <p>The meeting should be paper free and if it is necessary for any papers to be brought into the meeting they MUST NOT be shared.</p> <p>Attendees must bring their own pen and not share a pen with other attendees</p> <p>The Chairman shall consider adjusting the order of business to enable members of the public to leave as soon as the matter for which they have attended has been dealt with.</p> <p>Prior to the meeting the Clerk shall advise and encourage members of the public to, if possible, raise questions, representations or concerns via email or telephone prior to the</p>	
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				<p>meeting to avoid attendance if at all possible and she shall communicate such information to Councilors prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Parish Council meetings are considered 'permitted organized gatherings' (Section 3 (4a, Part 1 of schedule 3 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus restrictions) (Steps) (England) Regulations 2021). However, to make sure that the meeting remains Covid secure the Covid capacity of the hall (which is 84 persons) shall not be exceeded</p>	
Transmission of Covid-19 and risk of serious illness or death	Councilors, members of the public, staff	Use of the toilet	Transmission through use of the facility	<p>The toilets will be open as legally required.</p> <p>If any person requires the toilet, they walk to the toilet ensuring they maintain social distancing from all others in attendance.</p> <p>The Parish Council shall advise the NGCA if the toilet has been used during the meeting to enable cleaning to be undertaken after the meeting</p>	By advising the NGCA it will ensure that the toilet can be cleaned prior to the use by others.