



CALDICOT TOWN COUNCIL

Coronavirus - Emergency contingency plan

1. Introduction

There are a number of risks posed by Coronavirus that Councillors and employees will need to be aware of, and as an employer the Town Council have a duty of care towards their employees and must take reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of their workforce.

This protocol outlines the steps which will be taken should the office and or services be forced to close or should those Councillors or employees who are carers for others be forced to stay at home.

This policy can be adapted for any other emergency closures in the future.

2. Background

The Coronavirus is most likely to spread from person to person through:

- Direct contact with a person while they are infectious;
- Contact with droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes; or
- Touching objects or surfaces (such as drinking mugs or desks) that were contaminated by droplets from secretions coughed or sneezed from an infected person with a confirmed infection, and then touching your mouth or face.

Caldicot Town Council has a duty of care towards their Councillors and employees which includes not exposing them to unnecessary risk and not putting them in a position in which they could become infected by the virus without taking all reasonable precautions.

It is important to remember that Councillors and employees will be worried about the virus and the Town Council therefore needs to consider their wellbeing.

4. The Procedure

In case coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads more widely in the UK, the Town Council will take the steps below to help protect the health and safety of Councillors and staff.

4.1 Keep everyone updated on actions being taken to reduce risks of exposure in the workplace;

4.2 Make sure everyone's contact numbers and emergency contact details are up to date;

4.3 Make sure staff know how to spot symptoms of coronavirus and are clear on any relevant processes, for example sickness reporting and sick pay, and procedures in case someone in the workplace develops the virus;

4.4 Make sure there are clean places to wash hands with hot water and soap, and encourage everyone to wash their hands regularly;

4.5 Provide hand sanitiser and tissues for staff, and encourage them to use them;

4.6 Consider if protective face masks might help for people working in particularly vulnerable situations;

The Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk (in absence of Clerk) shall have delegated authority to make any necessary decisions to facilitate the council office (administration/meetings) returning back to near normal operational functions.

5. Office / Services Closures

The Government has set out four “phases” in response to the outbreak and when the recommendation be that the UK moves to the “delay” phase this will affect some of the Councillors and employees at the Town Council.

The Clerk/Deputy Clerk (in absence of Clerk) will inform the Mayor what the government have recommended during the “delay” phase and agree to implement this procedure.

5.1 That the Home Working policy be implemented for those office staff affected which includes:

- The ability to log on remotely via personal laptops, or the council owned laptop, to the Town Council’s Cloud based platform;
- Phone lines to be diverted to the Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk (in absence of Clerk).

5.2 That Council meetings are cancelled during the confinement and urgent decisions are delegated as per the resolution of Full Council on tba (date and min ref to be inserted);

5.3 That the Town Council follow government recommendations in relation to pay during self-isolation;

5.4 If the Town Clerk (Deputy Clerk in absence of Clerk) and/or the Town Mayor perceive the situation is likely to last longer than one month to fix a special council meeting shall be summoned.

5.5 The purpose of the meeting under 5.6 shall be to inform Council of what arrangements have been made and what will happen going forward.

6. Recommendation

That this protocol is agreed.