



Caldicot Town Council
Crisis Management Policy

Crisis policy

With high profile challenges like environmental disasters and global infections that could have a detrimental effect on our ability to operate the business, we have decided to introduce a crisis policy.

This policy will cover all crisis situations from an IT or infrastructure crisis to epidemics, pandemics, floods and other natural disasters. It is applicable to all employees at all levels across the Council.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we can maintain business continuity as best as possible, whilst protecting the health and well-being of our employees, customers and visitors. Handling these situations professionally protects the Council reputation, and therefore safeguards job security.

During any crisis the company will endeavour to be transparent and communicative. We'll provide up-to-date and accurate information on the status of the crisis and the impact on the Council business via email and meetings.

Crisis response

Prior to a crisis, the Clerk will have prepared a full list of job roles and essential tasks that must always be carried out, as well as identifying those roles that can be fulfilled from home. It is essential that contact numbers are accurate, so all staff should ensure they update their personnel details.

Plan for the worst, hope for the best

We do take a pragmatic approach to these situations. But we need to plan for the worst and hope we do not need to rely on it. The Clerk will put together a list of essential job duties and compile procedures for how those tasks should be carried out, to ensure that the Council can continue to run.

Once a potential crisis has been identified the Clerk, together with the Council will assess the risk and plan the immediate response. This plan will be cascaded throughout the Council.

- The Clerk will convey this to the staff.
- The Clerk is responsible for communicating with customers and suppliers.
- The Clerk will handle all media enquiries.

We must be adaptable

During any crisis the Council may insist on different working practices and/or locations. We do need all our staff to respond positively and flexibly to ensure the best outcomes for all of us.

Depending on the situation at the time, the specific circumstances and the business need, any attendance policies may have temporary adjustments made to meet the demands of the business.

At all times, the business will abide with any government guidelines and Acas. The law may change on a temporary basis and we must comply. We trust that you will be supportive and understand that any action taken is to comply with the law and to keep our team safe.

Health

Where the crisis involves the potential infection of colleagues and customers, the following shall apply.

Business as usual

If you feel well, please carry on with your job as usual but take extra precautions to keep yourself safe. Specific precautions are listed later in this policy and include actions like reducing business travel and maintaining good hand hygiene.

For those who are well and can attend work, this might mean an increased workload for you because of absences. So keeping this in mind, we might consider the following options:

- Overtime to cover for your ill colleagues.
- Working in a different job role.
- Working in a different location for a period of time.
- Working from home where possible.
- We might have to consider cancelling upcoming annual leave that you have planned.

We will ensure that there is regular and thorough communication around:

- Status of the pandemic
- Infection prevention,
- Best practice,
- Any other ways to improve business resilience.

Prevention is better than cure!

Infections love workplaces – let's ruin their fun.

We expect everyone to always follow good hygiene rules, but there are some other measures that we will take to protect our people. We will:

- Enforce excellent hygiene rules including:
 - o Providing antibacterial hand sanitisers,
 - o Additional cleaning of council premises,
 - o Waste bins will be emptied daily,
 - o Providing tissues for staff,
 - o Maintaining a distance of at least one metre from your colleagues.
- Discourage/ban visitors.
- Only allow visitors to our premises if essential.
- Facilitate a way to avoid face-to-face meetings

- Work with employees who are vulnerable such as those who are pregnant, immune-compromised or have underlying health conditions, to ensure that they don't feel at risk.
- Clearly communicate health and safety updates in line with government/Department of Health guidelines.

Situations where an employee contracts an infectious disease

If you attend work sick, then there is a risk that you will pass it to your colleagues as well as it potentially impeding your own recovery. So please be conscious of this when making your decisions about whether or not to attend work.

If you are fit for work and not contagious after receiving a diagnosis, then you will not be excluded from work. There are things that must be considered when taking a decision to stay away from the workplace:

- How easily is the infection transmitted?
- How is the infection transmitted?
- How long does the infection last?
- What harm can the infection cause to others?

If you have received a diagnosis and are contagious to others, then you must inform the Clerk immediately and stay away from work. Employees have a duty of care to protect themselves and others from harm from their actions or non-actions. In this instance we would deem such behaviour a gross misconduct offence for which you may be dismissed.

It is essential that you always follow the advice of an appropriate medical professional, which includes any advice to self-isolate or be in quarantine.

Please be assured of confidentiality. We will not share your personal medical information or any diagnosis with your colleagues. We may be obliged to inform all staff that an individual colleague has received a diagnosis, but you will not be mentioned by name. We trust you understand that we must notify people to ensure that they can take the necessary precautions themselves.

Guidance and advice from government agencies, such as the Department of Health (Public Health England) will be followed in response to a widespread disease outbreak.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act. (HASWA), the business will make an assessment of the risk to its employees whilst at work and implement control measures to protect its employees so far as reasonably practicable. The controls required will be proportionate to the level of risk and continually assessed as they evolve or progress.

Family issues

Where a family member of your household has been diagnosed, the following would apply:

- If you feel well and are willing to attend work, we might take a decision, depending on the circumstances, to ask you to remain at home or work from home. In which case you would be paid in full.
- If you feel well but want to remain at home with your family member who is unwell, this would be deemed "time off for dependant emergency" and be unpaid time off. This is usually for emergencies and a few days maximum. So it's important that you keep us updated daily on the situation.

- If you don't feel well, then you should let us know in line with the company absence policy.

If your child's school closes, we understand how difficult this can be. But it is important that you make appropriate arrangements. If possible, we would allow you to work from home and be paid, or if this is not possible the time off would be unpaid.

Natural disasters

Sadly, natural disasters such as flooding do strike around the world each year. These bring complete havoc to the lives and businesses of those affected.

Where our staff are unable to get to work due to road and transport closures or our business premises become unsafe, specific instructions will be issued. This may include asking staff to take annual leave, and looking at potential lay off or taking unpaid time off until we can operate effectively again.