

Northchurch Parish Council

Face to face Parish Council meetings from May 2021

Risk Assessment

Following the government announcement of further easing of lockdown restrictions from May 17th allowing for a return to face to face meetings and no further legislation allowing remote PC meetings NALC guidance includes a requirement to “carry out an appropriate COVID-19 risk assessment”. It is made very clear that “Failure to complete a risk assessment which takes account of COVID-19, or completing a risk assessment but failing to put in place sufficient measures to manage the risk of COVID-19, could constitute a breach of health and safety law”.

On that basis, this Risk Assessment takes each of the Key Principles as set out in the guidance and assesses whether or not practical arrangements can be put in place to allow a safe face to face meeting.

Key Principle	Government Guidance	Assessment	Conclusion
Action has been taken to seek the best option for an appropriate venue to allow social distancing and comply with normal Council requirements	To comply with social distancing of 2 meters and good ventilation / cleanliness	The meeting room is large enough to accommodate the 8 Parish Councillors likely to attend with the Clerk. There is space for members of the public if they also wish to attend the meeting. The Social Centre/SSRT has carried out a risk assessment and put in place a cleaning protocol	The Social Centre/SSRT will comply with government guidelines for social distancing and allow for public attendance
General Maintenance Issues following Lockdown	Ensure the premises has been cleaned before the meeting takes place	All chairs and tables and surfaces will be cleaned before the meeting. Windows and the exterior doors will be open to allow good ventilation during the meeting	The venue will provide a safe and appropriate place for the PC to meet

Social Distancing	Put in place measures to support social distancing – 2m or 1m plus risk mitigations.	Chairs will be placed at least 2 metres apart and Councillors will enter the hall through exterior doors, one at a time, and exit in the same way.	Social distancing will be able to be maintained throughout the meeting
Cleaning and Hygiene	Put in place cleaning / sanitiser protocols	Hand sanitiser will be provided for all Councillors and members of the public at entry and exit points and at tables	Provision will be made for hand cleaning at entry and exit points
Face Coverings	Councillors and members of the public will be encouraged to wear face coverings whilst in the meeting	Disposable face masks will be offered to Councillors and members of the public although wearing them will not be mandatory since no one should come within 2 metres of another person	Disposable masks will be provided for extra protection if required
Paperless meeting	No papers to be provided by the Clerk at the meeting	All documents will be pre circulated electronically and must be printed off by the individual if they wish to refer to them. All papers must be taken away with them at the end of the meeting	There will be no / minimal handling of papers or other materials by more than one person
Keeping Staff Safe	Consider the risks staff may be exposed to and how these can be mitigated.	Any Councillors, members of the public or staff who may be more at risk can choose not to attend the meeting.	Alternative face to face meeting will be offered to allow Councillors to meet with members of the public on a one-to-one basis

Conclusions:-

That based on the above risk assessment and risk management actions carried out as outlined it will be safe and appropriate to meet

June 2021