

## Return to In-Person Meetings

Changes to Regulations mean that parish council meetings make take place in person from 7 May. Owing to the increased spread of the delta variant, the Government has delayed the lifting of covid restrictions until at least 19 July. Therefore, if the next scheduled meeting on 23 June is to take place, safeguards must be put in place to mitigate the risk of covid transmission.

Council meetings are legally required to be open to the public. As a meeting organised by a public body, they are not subject to the 'rule of six' indoors but they must be managed safely.

A risk assessment has been carried out, at Annex A.

Guidance has been issued to help local councils conduct their meetings in a covid-secure manner. The advice below has been adapted to local requirements.

### Advice for in-person council meetings

Councillors, officers and the public are asked to comply with the following measures:

1. Members of the public are cordially requested to notify the Clerk that they wish to attend, to reserve their place as numbers are limited because of social distancing requirements.
2. Please do not attend if you are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 or have been told to self-isolate. If you suspect you have Covid-19 please self-isolate and book a PCR test via [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus). If you cannot use the online service, call 119 between 7am and 11pm.
3. All those attending council meetings are requested to take a Lateral Flow Test (LFT) in advance of the meeting. These tests can be collected from a pharmacy or ordered online.

The nearest collection point is **Cotswold Pharmacy**, Market Place, Northleach GL54 3EG.

To order tests online visit <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

These tests are self-administered and provide a result in 30 minutes. If you have a positive result please isolate immediately and book a PCR test, and (councillors) notify the Clerk.

4. On arrival at the meeting, please sign in at the venue and sanitize your hands.
5. Always maintain 2m distancing from others, when moving around and when seated.
6. Please (unless exempt) wear a face covering indoors. Once seated councillors may remove their face covering for the duration of the meeting. The public are requested to keep theirs on unless speaking. Please sanitise your hands before and after putting your face covering on or off. Face coverings should be either fully on or fully off and when on they should cover your nose and mouth. When off, please place it in a sealable plastic bag.
7. The main mode of Covid-19 transmission is through the air. Windows and doors will be opened where possible to maintain good ventilation indoors. Please avoid shouting or raising your voice as this increases the distance respiratory particles will travel.
8. If you develop Covid-19 symptoms after the meeting, then please follow the self-isolation protocol and take a PCR test. If your PCR test result comes back positive within 10 days of the meeting then please inform the Clerk, who will need to notify NHS Test and Trace.

<ends>

## Annex A: Covid Risk Assessment

Carried out by Pauline Rigby, Town Clerk on 16 June 2021

Government guidance on council meetings is at section 3b: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings)

Hazard	Who is at risk?	Control Measures	Actions	Responsible	Done
Large numbers of people wish to attend the meeting	Councillors Clerk Public	- Public access to meetings is required by law but ideally meetings should only be attended by those who need to attend. -Technology for online public access considered but not currently available - Defer non-essential business items to keep timings shorter.	- Members of public invited to submit questions by email or telephone instead of in person. - Review agenda to keep it shorter	Councillors Clerk	
Unwell person spreading coronavirus at the meeting	Councillors Clerk Public	- Anyone who feels unwell with symptoms of covid-19 is advised to stay at home and not attend the meeting. - As lateral flow tests are now freely available, meeting participants requested to have a test before the meeting.	- Issue guidance to participants on how to obtain a lateral flow test	Councillors Clerk Public	
Contracting or spreading coronavirus through lack of social distancing	Councillors Clerk Public	- Identify a suitable venue where social distancing can be maintained. - Be aware of the venue's covid capacity - All participants (unless exempt) to wear face coverings indoors. Councillors permitted to remove their mask during the meeting so they may be heard.	- Remind attendees of social distancing requirements at the start of the meeting - Be prepared to restrict access or adjourn the meeting if more people attend than the venue can accommodate.	Chairman	
Contracting or spreading coronavirus through inadequate cleaning	Councillors Clerk Public	- Review venue covid risk assessment - Clean contact points e.g. handles, light switches etc. before and after the meeting.		Clerk	

Contracting or spreading coronavirus through inadequate handwashing	Councillors Clerk Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow guidance on hand washing</li> <li>- Hand sanitiser provided where hand washing facilities are not available or hand washing is impractical.</li> </ul>		Councillors Clerk Public	
Contracting or spreading coronavirus through inadequate ventilation	Councillors Clerk Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Open windows where possible.</li> <li>- Leave (non-fire) doors open</li> <li>- Consider holding the meeting outdoors if weather permits.</li> </ul>	- If fire doors are propped open then someone must be assigned to close them in event of a fire.	Clerk	
Contracting or spreading coronavirus by lack of awareness or compliance with safety measures	Councillors Clerk Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publish this risk assessment</li> <li>- Circulate a copy of the advice for council meetings to councillors</li> </ul>		Clerk	
A participant reports a confirmed covid case after the meeting	Councillors Clerk Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep attendance record of the meeting</li> <li>- Following a confirmed case, follow NHS Test and Trace guidance.</li> </ul>	- Remind people to sign in or scan the venue QR code when they arrive	Clerk Chairman	
Lack of compliance with the law and regulations	Council Clerk	- Keep abreast of government guidance and review this risk assessment if it changes.	- Check gov.uk and NALC websites regularly	Clerk	