



working with the community

Somerton Town Council

Somerton COVID-19: Council internal plan

Adopted at the Chairs Meeting
17th March 2002

COVID-19: COUNCIL INTERNAL PLAN

Context:

The ability for the Council to function as normal may be put at risk by the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). This document sets out some contingency plans for continuing with essential parts of Council business.

Cessation of normal Council business closure of the Council offices, the Edgar Hall and potentially the Public Toilets shall be put in place in the event of a tangible trigger as follows: -

- Any pre-school, nursery school, or primary school closures in the Parish expected to last longer than 7 days.
- Closure of any secondary school or further education college which services people in the Parish lasting longer than 7 days.
- Advice to close from relevant National or Local bodies such as Public Health England, NALC, Somerset County Council, Central Government.
- A confirmed or suspected case of infection in a member of staff, Councillor or a member of a household of staff or Councillors.

The Clerk, in conjunction with the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council, shall have absolute discretion on the commencement of cessation of normal Council business, which will take into account, but not be bounded by, the trigger points outlined above. They shall keep under review the cessation period and normal service shall resume at their discretion.

Action required by staff and Councillor:

Any person exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 must ring NHS 111 and follow their advice. The Clerk must be informed immediately and the person must not conduct Council business in person until either a clear negative result from testing has been received, or until a quarantine period has been reached (advice on this to be taken by the person concerned from the NHS).

Service Provision In the event of Council building closures, the following will apply:

Continuing activities	Process	Personnel
Communication	<p>The office answerphone shall be set to explain the closures and signpost people to use email to communicate with the Council.</p> <p>Email shall be monitored by staff from home where possible at least twice daily on their normal days of work. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk shall liaise with each other and update social media and the Council website.</p>	<p>TC – Jude Raybould DTC - Claire Lucas</p>
Payments	<p>In the event that a closure is in place at a time when the previous pay run was made more the 4 weeks prior, the Town Clerk shall attend the office (which shall remain closed to the public and Cllrs), collate invoices and make payments online with secondary signatory approval by the Deputy Clerk. Payments will be authorised retrospectively the next time the Full Council meet. All wages/salaries shall be paid on time and in full and the Town Clerk can make the necessary arrangements for this to take place.</p>	<p>TC – Jude Raybould DTC - Claire Lucas</p>
Burials	<p>The Town Clerk to conduct burial administration will attend the office (which shall remain closed to public and Cllrs) twice per week – at midday on a Monday and a Thursday – to check if any urgent burial matters need attending</p>	<p>TC – Jude Raybould</p>

Ceasing activities	Action	
Council, Committee and Working Group meetings	All meetings to be cancelled until further notice. Clerk and Deputy Clerk to maintain communication with Cllrs and the public per above mechanisms. In the case of the Planning Committee, if a normal meeting has been cancelled, a meeting will be arranged as soon as possible upon re-commencement of Council activities.	TC – Jude Raybould DTC - Claire Lucas
Edgar Hall Bookings	All to be cancelled until further notice. Cancellation policy to not be enforced.	TC – Jude Raybould
Events	All Council and events cancelled within the known period of closure. Attendance to outside bodies and events by any member of staff or Councillor to be cancelled within the known period of cessation of normal services.	TC – Jude Raybould
Public Toilets	If advised by a relevant body, Public Toilets shall be locked and closed, and cleaners shall remain at home. If the advice allows for cleaners to remain working in Public Toilets, they shall remain open as normal.	TC – Jude Raybould Glen Cleaning Operative
Maintenance Person activities	Working from home (i.e. not 'in the community') should take place if possible. Work in the wider parish should halt until further notice unless it is a matter of urgency (i.e. public safety).	TC – Jude Raybould Shining Knight Services
All other administration functions	To be dealt with wherever possible by staff working from home or otherwise postponed until normal Council operations resume.	TC – Jude Raybould DTC - Claire Lucas
Publications (Viaducts)	To source printers to staple and fold document and professional delivery service if the guidance changes for enforced over 70's isolation.	TC – Jude Raybould Editors - Mo Fletcher & Neal Barton Somerton Printery

<p>Planning Applications</p>	<p>The authority to decide the council's response to planning applications be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee and Vice Chair of council. Whenever possible, members of the Planning Committee (or council in the case of large applications) will be informed of applications out for consultation and will be invited to submit comments to the Clerk.</p>	<p>TC – Jude Raybould PC- Brian Dobson Planning Committee Members VC – Martyn Smith</p>
<p>Community's efforts to support those in need of assistance or prevent social isolation.</p>	<p>The Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, may incur expenditure from the Tourism and Promoting Somerton P&C budget line, where such expenditure will help the community's efforts to support those in need of assistance or prevent social isolation.</p>	<p>TC- Jude Raybould C – Dean Ruddle VC – Martyn Smith</p>
<p>Virtual Meetings</p>	<p>Should government allow councils to meet virtually (online), the council will take all reasonable steps to facilitate this</p>	<p>TC- Jude Raybould C – Dean Ruddle VC – Martyn Smith</p>

Pay and rights

In the event of the above plan being initiated all members of staff will retain full employment rights and receive full pay as set out in their normal contracted hours.