

REOCCUPATION OF THE TOWN HALL AND GRADUAL RETURNING TO WORK AFTER
COVID-19 (RISK ASSESSMENT)

SUMMARY

This document develops considerations for the safe reoccupation of the Town Hall and consideration for the safe return to work of staff who have been working from home due to Government advice on Covid-19.

- How employees and contractors can safely enter the premises that have been off limits to those working from home.
- How social distancing measures will be maintained, especially around entrances, lifts, kitchen, toilets, Magistrates room and all other common areas – meetings***
- The provision of adequate hand washing and welfare facilities
- Changes to cleaning operations – in the context of Covid-19
- Whether further training or instruction is required and how it will be delivered
- Appropriate signage will be installed, as a reminder to staff of the new working arrangements
- If a member of the team does not feel well, they are not “to soldier on” but continue to work from home if able. They should report their absence to their line manager in line with usual procedures.

PART 1

What issues do we need to consider regarding the return to work of staff in the Town Hall?

Hand cleaning and cleaning in general

- Upon entering the building all staff must wash their hands with soap and water before undertaking any task
- Wash hands at regular intervals – as often as every half an hour or after a task
- Use a suitable effective hand cream to avoid dry hands or dermatitis
- Communal equipment such as photocopier/franking machine must be cleansed by the operative after use

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- Crockery and cutlery etc. must not be shared
- Officers will be allocated the use of one toilet cubicle and will be responsible for cleansing after use
- Sinks must be cleansed after use
- Where possible doors can be left open to reduce the need to turn door handles, where this is not possible e.g. to fire doors; use shoulder, hip, or elbow. If you do have to use your hands clean the handle afterwards
- Cleaning and cleansing of the communal areas will be increased
- The Town Hall will remain closed to the public for the foreseeable future

Social distancing

- The major area of potential conflict is the Magistrates Room, the main working area of the Town Council's town Hall staff
- Historically four or five people have workstations albeit that with part time working not all the staff are in the room at the same time
- My advice would be Jo only uses her own desk when Lisa or Emma are in the room, there is not enough separation with Vic and Charles - at all other times Jo has a temporary workstation in the Council Chamber or Committee Room
- The initial plan would be to have no more than two officers in the Magistrates Room at any one time
- There would therefore be a staggered, agreed return to work
- Perspex screening will be installed between the four central block of desks before any of the officers return to work, unless there is only one officer in the room
- Individuals will be responsible for the sanitising and cleaning of their workstation
- Fig.1 shows the existing layout of the desks and it is not proposed to alter this
- There are three possible entrances and exits as shown but it is only proposed to use doors I and II to reduce the risk of unwanted entry
- Use of the kitchen should be restricted to one at a time, so call out when approaching.

Proposed direction of movement of personnel using the Magistrates Room, with reference to Fig. 1

Below are examples of movement to avoid passing within 2 meters of a colleague

LC and CW in the room

- Lisa would enter and exit through door I
- Charles would enter and exit through door II

LC and VF in the room

- Lisa would enter and exit through door I

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- Vic would enter and exit through door II

LC and EE in the room

- Lisa would enter and exit through door I
- Emma would enter and exit through door II

LC and JM in the room

- Lisa would enter and exit through door I
- Joanne would enter and exit through door II

Charles and Vic in the room

- Charles would enter and exit through door I
- Vic would enter and exit through door II

Charles and Emma in the room

- Charles would enter and exit through door I
- Emma would enter and exit through door II

Charles and Lisa in the room

- Charles would enter and exit through door II
- Lisa would enter and exit through door I

Charles and Jo

- **NOT ALLOWED**

Vic and Emma in the room

- Vic would enter and exit through door I
- Emma would enter and exit through door II

Vic and Joanne in the room

- **NOT ALLOWED**

Emma and Jo in the room

- Emma would enter and exit through door II
- Jo would enter and exit through door I

When there is only one Officer in the room, and another wants to enter that Officer must announce their presence and agree the means of safe entry based on the above protocol.

Do not use a colleagues workstation

Each Officer will be responsible for the cleanliness of their own workstation and provided with adequate supplies of hand sanitiser and cleaning product.

Products must be purchased so that each Officer has their own personal supply.

PART 2

What issues do we need to consider regarding building safety?

Fire safety systems

- In terms of reoccupation all relevant fire safety equipment and systems must be tested before employees and others are allowed back into the Town Hall
- A full test of the fire detection system – using multiple call points and involving the call receiving centre – including the Refuge Call System
- The fire alarm system will be tested weekly as normal and the result recorded in the logbook
- A full discharge of the emergency lighting in the building will be arranged but this can be delayed until there is a chance of someone working in the building at night
- A visual inspection of all fire extinguishers to ensure they are correctly located, full and not damaged
- Check that fire escape routes are clear of any obstructions
- Check that all external fire escape doors are operational
- Check the operation of internal fire doors to ensure they close properly
- Check that formal maintenance inspections are not required – give plenty of notice to service engineers when they are required, they will be busy catching up with other buildings that have been closed during the lockdown period

Water management – control of Legionella bacteria

In the case of the Town Hall, since there has been some occupation during the last 7 weeks certain taps and supplies will have been used, however to be certain there is no risk of contamination it is advised that all taps in the building should be turned on and temperatures recorded in line with L8 – Legionnaires Disease – The Control of legionella bacteria in water systems, Approved Code of Practice and Guidance.

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Deep cleaning for reoccupation

The Town Hall Housekeeper will deep clean communal areas in preparation for the return of Town Hall staff. Because some staff have been working in the Town Hall from time to time; surfaces, handrails, door handles and door brasses will be cleaned every half an hour.

Plant and equipment safety

Gas and electricity supplies have not been switched off during the lockdown period therefore should not require any significant testing or inspection.

The usual programmed inspection regime should be maintained giving plenty of notice to contractors as they are likely to be busy catching up with other work.

Contractors will need to be "Logged in " and those new to the building go through the induction procedure and shown the Asbestos Register.

Training, Instruction and Supervision

Staff will be introduced slowly to the new working arrangements and be encouraged to make comments to see if improvements or clarity can be added.

All the above will under constant review, with the aim of maintaining a safe place to work and regarding the confidence of the staff to return to work safely when that time comes.

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