

Council Meetings in a Covid-safe environment

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Introduction

Following the expiry of the regulations concerning remote meetings, Council meetings now must take place in person at a single, specified, geographical location, and being “present” at such a meeting involves physical presence at that location.

The following list contains the meetings that the public are entitled to attend taking place whilst the social distancing measures are in place (planned to come to end on the 21 June) and slightly beyond. There may be other meetings that will be streamed, but will be held virtually because they are not subject to the requirement to be held in a physical location (eg the Local Outbreak Engagement Board).

Meeting	Date	Time	Membership	Quorum	Notes
Eastern Area Planning Committee	02/06/2021	18:30	9	4	Physical location
Western Area Planning Committee	09/06/2021	18:30	9	4	Physical location
Executive	10/06/2021	17:00	9	4	Physical location
Joint Public Protection Committee	14/06/2021	19:00	6	3	Physical location
District Planning Committee	16/06/2021	18:30	11	4	Physical location
Licensing Committee	21/06/2021	16:30	12	4	Physical location
Eastern Area Planning Committee	23/06/2021	18:30	9	4	Physical location
Western Area Planning Committee	30/06/2021	18:30	9	4	Physical location

Unless advised otherwise, all relevant meetings will continue to be streamed via YouTube. The meetings will continue to use Zoom or Teams to capture the meeting participants, whether they are in the meeting room or attending virtually.

Covid-safety measures

The Council is responsible for ensuring meetings are conducted safely and follow the public health guidance regarding health, hygiene and social distancing.

All persons attending a meeting must comply with the Covid safety measures set out in Appendix A.

All new cases of Covid19 must be reported immediately to hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk and to CV19notifications@westberks.gov.uk.

Attendance and Speaking Rights

The Covid-safe capacity of the meeting room (generally, if not invariably, the Council Chamber) may mean that not all members of a committee (etc) can attend physically and some may thus attend remotely (but also see below as to voting etc).

Physical attendance will thus be prioritised for members of the committee (etc). Due to the fact that the Council has to ensure that the meetings are conducted in a safe manner there may be a limited capacity for other Council Members and members of the public to physically attend the meeting. All non-committee member participants are therefore encouraged to view/participate virtually (eg via Zoom invitation or by viewing the streamed meeting).

Where members of the public are entitled to attend a meeting (including where they have a right to ask a question or address the meeting in accordance with the Constitution) they will be encouraged to attend remotely (eg by joining the meeting as a Zoom participant). Where they attend in person this may be subject to restrictions as a result of Covid-safety - for example a restricted number of members of the public may be permitted in the meeting room at any one time, although they will be able to view the streamed meeting on screens outside the meeting room.

Streaming

The concept is that each individual participant, whether they are in the room or accessing remotely, will be in the virtual meeting with their image captured via their laptop camera, along with a general image of the Council Chamber from one of the three ceiling cameras. The YouTube stream/recording will thus show everyone individually plus a general view.

Venue

For those present in the venue (eg the Council Chamber):

- so that you can still use your laptop for meeting papers, etc, the Zoom meeting will be displayed on the screens – thus you will be looking at the screens rather than your laptop to see who is speaking remotely etc;
- if it is a Dell XPS-13 (ie a Members' issued laptop), you will use your laptop inverted so that the camera is at the top (avoiding the hands in front of the keypad issue) – to support this all Members will be supplied with wireless keyboards (these have been purchased by ICT and will be distributed to all Members in due course);
- there will be laptop risers available in the room – please use one to elevate your inverted laptop so that the camera is in line with your face;
- because you won't be using the laptop's keypad, you won't be using the touchpad either so please remember to bring your mouse;
- before you attend your first physical meeting, and on a regular basis, please check that: your laptop is set to automatically flip the screen image if inverted; your wireless keyboard works properly; and your mouse is charged and works properly – if there are any issues please contact ITHelpdesk;
- you will be using an external desk microphone to speak (muting and unmuting them to avoid meeting room feedback);
- your laptop microphone must be muted during the meeting (when you are speaking using the external microphone, the Zoom session on your laptop may warn you that you are muted - you shouldn't see this if you are using your laptop for papers etc, but if you do please ignore and keep muted on Zoom);
- instead of using your laptop speakers/a headset/an earpiece/etc to hear the meeting participants you will either listen to someone in the room with you, or hear a participant over the room audio, so your laptop speakers must be muted/on zero volume during the meeting to prevent feedback/reverberation;
- there will be eight charged power packs available in the Council Chamber in case anyone's laptop runs low on power (but please would everybody ensure their laptop is fully charged before attending).

Voting

Only members attending the meeting in person at the physical location can take part in the formal decision. This will be by physical show of hands.

Appendix A - Covid measures

The Council is responsible for ensuring meetings are conducted safely and follow the public health guidance regarding health, hygiene and social distancing.

All persons attending a meeting must:

- sign in to the meeting and certify that:
 - they do not have any Covid symptoms including, a new continuous cough, a high temperature or loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)
 - they have received a negative Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test (see Appendix B) or Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test result within the last 24 hours;
 - no member of their household has tested positive for Covid within the last ten days;
 - they have not been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace or who is in a relevant quarantine period following return from travel.
- sign in to the NHS app via the NHS Test & Trace QR code located in reception;
- wear a face covering when in the building, unless they are seated in the meeting or have a face covering exemption due to age, health or another condition. You may choose to continue to wear a face covering if you wish;
- observe two metre social distancing where possible;
- where two metre social distancing is not possible:
 - observe at least one metre social distancing, with additional measures such as plastic screens; and
 - wear a face covering at all times, unless speaking in the meeting (to assist anyone who is lip reading);
- wipe down your desk and any supplied equipment (eg the microphone) before and after the meeting using the cleaning materials supplied, please sanitize hands before and after;
- avoid physical contact such as hand-shakes etc;
- avoid sharing pens, documents and other objects;
- use hand sanitiser when entering and before leaving the meeting rooms and buildings and after touching any surfaces such as door handles etc;
- abide by any signage or seating plans and do not alter the position of chairs and tables to help maintain social distancing;
- ensure as much ventilation in the chamber/room as possible. If the mechanical air handling system is operational this will suffice as fresh air is brought in from outside. If there is any doubt, please ventilate the chamber/room by opening all doors and any available windows.

Appendix B - Lateral Flow Testing

About one in three people with Covid-19 do not have symptoms but can still infect others. Getting tested regularly is the only way to know if you have the virus. If people test positive and self-isolate, it helps stop the virus spreading.

It is a requirement of attending a meeting that Members, and members of the public, confirm that they have a lateral flow test on the day of the meeting - please follow the link to the gov.uk website which provides the information you need to get your free LFD tests: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-Covid-19/testing/regular-rapid-coronavirus-tests-if-you-do-not-have-symptoms/>

You can easily order tests for delivery to your home address. You can also go to our Community Testing sites where you can collect one to two boxes at a time. These are located at

- Thatcham Memorial Hall, Bath Rd, Thatcham RG18 3HB,
- Hungerford Church Street Pay and Display car park RG17 0JG
- Burghfield Community Sports Association, James Lane, Burghfield RG30 3RS.

Please also take a look at the mobile community collect route which can be found <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/lateralfloflowtesting> as we may be in your area throughout the week.

Pharmacies are also providing the test kits free of charge. There are pharmacies providing free test kits throughout the district with more signing up every day, so please use the link above to find out the most convenient method of obtaining free tests kits for you. To find out more about pharmacies in your area you can visit <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>

After your test packs arrive

You should:

- take a rapid lateral flow test twice a week (every three or four days);
- [report rapid lateral flow test results](#) the day you or someone in your household takes the test.

If a test result is positive

- everyone in the household must [self-isolate](#) immediately
- the person who tested positive should [get a PCR test](#) to confirm the result (a PCR test is a different type of coronavirus test) and follow [government guidance](#)

How rapid lateral flow tests work

Rapid lateral flow tests help to find cases in people who may have no symptoms but are still infectious and can give the virus to others.

The test usually involves taking a sample from your tonsils (or where they would have been) and from your nose, using a swab. You can get a result in 30 minutes.

Appendix C – Covid Guidance for Meeting Chairman

It is the responsibility of the meeting Chair Person to set and maintain the necessary covid secure measures. Please read out the following points at the start of the meeting.

This meeting is being held in-line with current Covid restrictions, we need to remind all persons attending the meeting in person that they must:

- sign in on the meeting register and the NHS app via the NHS Test & Trace QR code;
- wear a face covering when in the building, unless you are seated in the meeting or have a face covering exemption;
- observe two metre social distancing where possible;
- clean your desk and any supplied equipment (e.g. the microphone) before and after the meeting using the cleaning materials supplied;
- avoid physical contact such as hand-shakes etc;
- avoid sharing pens, documents and other objects;
- use hand sanitiser when entering and before leaving the meeting rooms and buildings and after touching any surfaces such as door handles etc;
- abide by any signage or seating plans to help maintain social distancing.

Council Meetings Register of Attendees

Meeting Title	
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Date of Meeting	
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This register complies with the need for designated venues in certain sectors to have a system in place to request and record contact details of customers, visitors and staff to help break the chains of transmission of coronavirus and links to NHS Test and Trace. For further information please view link and privacy notice on reverse:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/maintaining-records-of-staff-customers-and-visitors-to-support-nhs-test-and-trace>

Please also check into this venue by using the NHS QR code located in reception.

In signing this register you are confirming that:

- You are not currently required to self-isolate as instructed by NHS Test and Trace,
- You and your household have not tested positive for Covid 19 in the last 10 days, you have received a negative Lateral Flow Device (LFD) test result within the last 24 hours;
- You are not currently displaying Covid symptoms
- You will follow all covid restrictions and guidance in place during your visit

Name	Contact Number
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These slips should be completed by all in-person meeting attendees and kept by the meeting Clerk for 21 days from the date of the meeting after which they can be destroyed.

Appendix D - Privacy Notice

This privacy notice is intended for designated venues only.

Recording staff, customer and visitor details: how we use your information

To support NHS Test and Trace (which is part of the Department for Health and Social Care) in England, we have been mandated by law to collect and keep a limited record of staff, customers and visitors who come onto our premises for the purpose of contact tracing.

By maintaining records of staff, customers and visitors, and sharing these with NHS Test and Trace where requested, we can help to identify people who may have been exposed to the coronavirus.

As a customer/visitor of West Berkshire Council you will be asked to provide some basic information and contact details. The following information will be collected:

- the names of all customers or visitors
- a contact phone number for each customer or visitor
- date of visit and arrival time and departure time

The venue/establishment as the data controllers for the collection of your personal data, will be responsible for compliance with data protection legislation for the period of time it holds the information. When that information is requested by the NHS Test and Trace service, the service would at this point be responsible for compliance with data protection legislation for that period of time.

The NHS Test and Trace service as part of safeguarding your personal data, has in place technical, organisational and administrative security measures to protect your personal information that it receives from the venue/establishment, that it holds from loss, misuse, and unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration and destruction.

In addition, if you only interact with one member of staff during your visit, the name of the assigned staff member will be recorded alongside your information.

NHS Test and Trace have asked us to retain this information for 21 days from the date of your visit, to enable contact tracing to be carried out by NHS Test and Trace during that period. We will only share information with NHS Test and Trace if it is specifically requested by them.

For example, if another customer at the venue reported symptoms and subsequently tested positive, NHS Test and Trace can request the log of customer details for a particular time period (for example, this may be all customers who visited on a particular day or time-band, or over a 2-day period).

We may/will [delete as necessary] require you to pre-book appointments for visits or to complete a form on arrival.

Under government guidance, the information we collect may include information which we would not ordinarily collect from you and which we therefore collect only for the purpose of contact tracing. Information of this type will not be used for other purposes, and NHS Test and Trace will not disclose this information to any third party unless required to do so by law (for example, as a result of receiving a court order). In addition, where the information is only collected for the purpose of contact tracing, it will be destroyed by us 21 days after the date of your visit.

However, the government guidance may also cover information that we would usually collect and hold onto as part of our ordinary dealings with you (perhaps, for example, your name, date of birth and phone number). Where this is the case, this information only will continue to be held after 21 days and we will use it as we usually would, unless and until you tell us not to.

Your information will always be stored and used in compliance with the relevant data protection legislation.

The use of your information is covered by the General Data Protection Regulations Article 6 (1) (c) – a legal obligation to which we as a venue/establishment are subject to. The legal obligation to which we're subject, means that we're mandated by law, by a set of new regulations from the government, to cooperate with the NHS Test and Trace service, in order to help maintain a safe operating environment and to help fight any local outbreak of corona virus.

West Berkshire Council will not transfer personal data outside the UK, the EU or to anywhere else.

By law, you have a number of rights as a data subject, such as the right to be informed, the right to access information held about you and the right to rectification of any inaccurate data that we hold about you.

You have the right to request that we erase personal data about you that we hold (although this is not an absolute right).

You have the right to request that we restrict processing of personal data about you that we hold in certain circumstances.

You have the right to object to processing of personal data about you on grounds relating to your particular situation (also again this right is not absolute).


If you are unhappy or wish to complain about how your information is used, you should contact a member of staff in the first instance to resolve your issue.

If you are still not satisfied, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. Their website address is www.ico.org.uk.

West Berkshire Council data protection officer can be contacted by email at dp@westberks.gov.uk

We keep our privacy notice under regular review, and we will make new versions available on our privacy notice page on West Berkshire Council website. This privacy notice was last updated on 26th May 2021.

Appendix E – Risk Assessment

Directorate	Resources					
Service	Strategy & Governance					
Team	Democratic Services					
Job, Activity or Task	Attendance of staff, members and the public at Council meetings					
List the Hazards?	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing to lower risks?	Any further action needed?	Action by Whom?	Action by when?	Date complete
Transmission of virus (Covid19) 	Meeting attendees	Hands means while coronavirus is not likely to survive for long periods of time on outdoor surfaces in sunlight, it can live for more than 24 hours in indoor environments. Washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or using hand sanitizer, regularly throughout the day will reduce the risk of catching or passing on the virus.	Ensure facilities available for washing and/or sanitizing hands regularly are in place and used by all attendees. Clean desks and work surfaces with materials provided.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Face means face coverings reduce the dispersion of these droplets, meaning if you're carrying the virus you're less likely to spread it when you exhale. Coronavirus is carried in the air by tiny respiratory droplets that carry the virus. Larger droplets can land on other people or on surfaces they touch while smaller droplets, called aerosols, can stay in the air indoors for at least 5 minutes, and often much longer if there is no ventilation.	Wear face covering when moving around the buildings and when unable to maintain 2m social distance. Wear a face covering when working in the office and away from your desk. You do not need to wear a face covering when sat at your desk if you do not wish to do so.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	

Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Space means transmission of the virus is most likely to happen within 2 metres, with risk increasing exponentially at shorter distances. While keeping this exact distance isn't always possible, remaining mindful of surroundings and continuing to make space has a powerful impact when it comes to containing the spread of virus.	Maintain 2metres social distance, where possible. Ensure good ventilation, where possible.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Desks: only use the desks you have been allocated.	Ensure desk booking system used. Clean your desk at the start and end of each day to protect you and other from spread of virus.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Circulation space: use any one way system as directed.	Ensure signs are maintained and routes are used appropriately.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Use of rooms and spaces: comply with any maximum numbers allowed and ensure good ventilation by opening windows where possible.	All attendees to comply with maximum capacity.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Advise members to arrive immediately before the meeting and take their seats on arrival, and leave immediately afterwards	Chair or Clerk to ask people to take seats immediately. Seats to be positioned 2 metres apart.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Avoid huddled conversations and maintain 2 metres social distancing where possible	Chair or Clerk to ask people to take seats immediately.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	This guidance and risk assessment to be provided to all members and staff attending prior to meetings so that they are aware of these safety measures	Guidance to be made available as required.	Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Notice to be given that number of public attendees may be restricted		Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	

Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Meeting register and NHS Test and Trace QR code to be used for all in-person meeting attendees.		Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	All seating and desks to be positioned with 2 metres social distance where possible.		Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	
Transmission of virus (Covid19)	Meeting attendees	Microphone for public speaking to be cleaned between use appropriate anti-viral cleaning agent to be used)		Meeting Chair and all in-person attendees	All meetings	

Risk assessment completed by	Mike Lindenburn
Risk assessment sponsored by	Sarah Clarke
Date assessment completed	May 2021
Risk assessment communicated to relevant staff by	Briefing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Copy & Signature <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> please state:

Covid19 Risks and Controls
<p>You must not come into work if you have Covid-19 symptoms or have tested positive for COVID-19 and have been told to self-isolate. Anyone who tests positive for Covid-19, or has been told they have been in contact with someone who has, now has a legal duty to quarantine. Failure to comply may result in a fine, starting from £1,000 and rising to £10,000 for repeat offenders or serious breaches.</p> <p>To help assess what variety of contact you may be considered to have had and what to do we have included links below to relevant guidance: Guidance for contacts of people with confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection who do not live with the person: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person/guidance-for-contacts-of-people-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-who-do-not-live-with-the-person Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection</p> <p>All new possible cases of Covid19 must be reported immediately to the relevant Manager and HR (via email to hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk and via Crest by following this link https://crest.info-exchange.com/Covid</p> <p>The Manager and member of staff should arrange testing ASAP (http://intranet/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=48714).</p> <p>In this scenario we will also need to consider contact tracing for other persons who may have been in close contact. All persons attending meetings in person will need to sign the meeting register, this may assist with in any contact tracing should a staff member have a confirmed case of Covid19. Please also use the NHS Test & Trace QR code.</p>