



Guidance for public attendance at meetings

Democratic Services

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Lifting of National Lockdown Restrictions – 19 July 2021

In response to the relaxation of rules from 19 July, we have reviewed the arrangements for public attendance at meetings of the Council. Cases of COVID-19 continue to rise, and we must continue to act carefully and remain cautious to help protect those in attendance.

We have increased the seating capacity available for the public but have decided to retain a minimum of 1m distancing between public seating to provide confidence to those who are attending but also to reduce the risk of infection should an individual with Covid enter the meeting space.

Whilst the meeting room is available for public attendance, we are very aware that many residents are still apprehensive about large indoor gatherings. We shall therefore continue to live-stream all public meetings and would encourage everyone to choose this viewing option as their primary way to observe the proceedings.

The live broadcast (or the recording after the event) can be viewed from the respective [meeting date web page](#) or via our [YouTube channel](#). If you subscribe through YouTube, you can receive alerts when a meeting is about to commence.

If you still wish to attend in person, you are asked contact Democratic Services on 01202 096660 so that appropriate measures can be managed. We will be able to provide you with guidance on latest measures in place and how to access the meeting space. We will ask for details of those attending, including the number and names of persons attending with you, and a contact number should we need to be in touch.

In addition to the 1m seated distancing being observed, we continue to strongly encourage all attendees to:-

- Use a [free lateral flow test](#) on the day of the meeting.
- Not to enter the building if displaying any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Scan the QR code displayed when entering the council building to help support NHS Track and Trace.
- Use hand-sanitiser upon entering the building and repeat regularly whilst in attendance.
- Continue to practice social distancing whilst within council buildings.
- Wear a face-covering when moving through our buildings, removing it only when seated.
- Wipe down chairs and desks before and after use using the anti-bacterial wipes provided.
- Observe any other rules that may be in place at the time of your visit.

We welcome and promote public participation in local democracy activities but at the present time we need to balance this against the need to protect the health of councillors, officers and those visiting to attend our meetings and ensure that our democratic and decision-making processes can continue. We therefore thank you in advance for your co-operation and observation of our local guidelines if you do attend our meetings.

Richard Jones
Head of Democratic Services