

TOWN COUNCIL

DATE: 17 March 2020

REPORT OF: TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: CORONAVIRUS

PART I

RECOMMENDATION

The Town Council is recommended to:

- (a) Adopt the attached Operational Contingency Plan;
- (b) Approve the resolution *“to extend the delegation of Council decisions to the Town Clerk during any period of restricted activity as declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus”*. Such delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents with feedback to a future Town Council meeting on actions taken during that period;
- (c) Approve the establishment of an Emergency Response cost centre and allocate a budget of £5,000 for the 2020/21 financial year from general reserves to enable the purchasing of consumables and other actions related to Council activities or assistance in the community;
- (d) Note that the Schedule of Meetings, particularly the dates of the Annual Parish Meeting (April) and the Annual Meeting of the Town Council (May) changing in order to accommodate the situation at the time. To be confirmed by the Town Clerk as and when.

1. PURPOSE

Due to the Council’s schedule of meetings it has been necessary to call an additional meeting for the Council to consider the recommendations contained within this report in response to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

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2. BACKGROUND

The Town Council has a duty of care to do all that it can to prevent the spread of an infectious disease not just to town council staff, but also to casual hirers and longer term tenants of the Manor House and Riverside Centre among others.

Based on guidance received from the Society of Local Council Clerks, the Town Clerk has put together the attached draft Operational Contingency Plan (Appendix A) to ensure the Town Council continues to function in its core business.

3. BEING PREPARED

It is likely the Government will pass emergency legislation in the near future to support the prevention of the spread of Covid-19. This may include restricting an individual's activities and travel; increasing the number of people who are asked to self-isolate and preventing groupings of people for meetings and events. The latter will affect the Manor House & Riverside community centres.

Current government guidance is the country has now entered the 'delay' phase of their prevention plan, and have advised that if you exhibit a fever of and above 37.8oC, or other flu-like symptoms you should self-isolate for a period of 7 days. Public meetings and events are still permitted but this will be reviewed in the near future.

4. RECCOMENDATIONS

Town Council is recommended to:

- Adopt the attached Operational Contingency Plan;
- Approve the resolution *"to extend the delegation of Council decisions to the Town Clerk during any period of restricted activity as declared by the Government in respect of the Covid-19 virus"*. Such delegation to enable the Council to fulfil its responsibilities to its residents with feedback to a future Town Council meeting on actions taken;
- Approve the establishment of an Emergency Response cost centre and allocate a budget of £5,000 (or more – to be determined by Council) for the 2020/21 financial year from general reserves to enable the purchasing of consumables and other actions related to Council

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activities or assistance in the community in the time of an emergency;

- Note that the Schedule of Meetings, in particular the dates of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council and the Annual Parish Meeting changing in order to accommodate the situation at the time. To be confirmed by the Town Clerk as and when.

5. REVIEW

The Operational Contingency Plan as presented is a 'fluid' document which will have to be reviewed, monitored and updated depending upon advice and guidance received from the government.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

Additional information can be obtained by visiting [Public Health England](#) which is updated at 2 p.m. every day. There is also a useful government [blog](#) which summarises the Covid-19 virus.

Andrew McKenzie
Town Clerk