



## COVID-19 Method Statement – Updated Sept 2021

### Face-to-Face meetings of Whittingham Parish Council

#### Revised to comply with amended hire conditions at Goosnargh Village Hall

#### Background

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness<sup>1</sup>.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Fatigue
- Loss of taste or smell,

The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it's important that you also practice respiratory etiquette (for example, by coughing into a flexed elbow).

Not all cases will present symptoms & individuals should always consider that they, or any other individual may be a carrier of the virus.

Individuals can reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 by taking some simple precautions, such as physical distancing, wearing a mask, keeping rooms well ventilated, avoiding crowds and close contact, washing hands regularly with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

## **Face-to-Face Meetings**

Goosnargh Village Hall has been identified as a suitable secure venue for meetings. The Parish Council Clerk will communicate (via the normal channels) that a meeting will take place. The communication will specify any specific arrangements associated with keeping the venue Covid secure.

This Method Statement (and the associated Risk Assessment) will be accessible on the Parish Council website and the Clerk will have a copy available for reference at the meeting.

- You **must not** attend the meeting if you or anyone in your household has had Covid 19 symptoms in the last 48hrs
- You must not attend if you are in a period of self-isolation or quarantine
- Anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable or is in a high-risk group is not expected to attend but may do so if they consider that the specified controls are acceptable for their own particular circumstances.

The Parish Clerk will keep a log (Appendix 1) of everyone attending the meeting, this will include:

- Full Name
- Address
- E mail address
- Telephone Number

Scanning the QR code (if an individual has the NHS App.) will be encouraged but is not compulsory.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms within 10 days of attending the meeting, you **MUST** seek a Covid 19 test and you **must** alert the Parish Clerk who will inform the Village Hall booking secretary.

## **Social Distancing**

This is the primary control measure for minimising the risk of contracting the virus and attendees are encouraged to ensure social distancing is maintained especially in confined areas (e.g moving and stowing equipment and accessing the toilets).

The Village Hall is considered to be a Covid secure venue because it has a large enough open space to allow for sufficient tables and chairs to be positioned to comply with social distancing requirements. Tables and chairs should be positioned such that attendees are not directly facing each other.

The Parish Council has agreed to abide by the Village Hall's special conditions of hire and all attendees are required to note and adhere to the following conditions.

The Village Hall has adopted a one-way system which all attendees will be expected to follow.

Previous experience indicates that members of the public wishing to attend will be low, however those wishing to attend are requested to contact the Clerk by 5.00pm on the Monday before the meeting. If more than 30 people wish to attend, people will be directed to seats furthest from the entrance on arrival and those closest to the exits will be requested to leave first.

The Chairman may request that anyone refusing to comply with the above arrangements, withdraws from the meeting.

### **Cleaning**

All Councillors and the Clerk will arrive at the Village Hall no later than 7.00pm to ensure that

- sufficient tables and chairs are laid out using a wide U shape and are sanitised before the meeting
- all touch surfaces (door handles, window latches, light switches, locks etc. are sanitised

All Councillors and the Clerk will ensure the room is cleared and sanitised at the end of the meeting.

All wipes will be disposed of in a suitable container / bin which will be emptied at the end of the meeting.

### **Ventilation**

Doors (except fire doors) will be opened to allow for a through flow of fresh air. This also removes the need for attendees to touch door handles.

Where convenient, windows will be opened to increase air flow as required.

### **Hand Sanitising & Washing**

The Parish Council will provide alcohol-based hand sanitisers and wipes for the tables and chairs. The Clerk will welcome all attendees to ensure sanitiser is used and the attendee log is completed.

Other fixtures, fittings and touch surfaces will be cleaned using the Hall's cleaning products as specified in the Hall's risk assessment.

In the unlikely event that toilet facilities are required, use will be by request only. The user will be required to sanitise the area which will be checked and wiped again before the premises are vacated.

### **Face Coverings (PPE)**

All attendees will be required to wear face coverings (mask or visor) when arriving, moving around or leaving the Hall.

When seated (during the meeting) masks may be removed due to suitable social distancing being maintained.

### **Materials, equipment & items**

Meetings will be as paperless as possible. If papers are provided individuals will be discouraged from sharing with others and will be asked to take the papers with them at the end of the meeting.

Touching or using any equipment should be kept to a minimum and the kitchen area will be 'out of bounds'.

### **Illness**

In the unlikely event that someone is taken ill during the meeting, in accordance with the Hall's risk assessment, they will be asked to use the disabled toilet as a safe area until they can be safely attended to.

All Councillors will be required to acknowledge receipt and compliance with the Method Statement prior to the Sept meeting.

**END**