



# Stroud District Council RISK ASSESSMENT: Covid-19: Working away from home

## Corporate Risk Assessment:

This risk assessment is intended to address the general hazard presented by Covid-19/Coronavirus to SDC activities. Additional service specific hazards may need to be added to this assessment or recorded on other service specific risk assessments.

**Assessed by: Phil Park**  
**Reviewed by: Phil Park**

**ASSESSMENT DATE: 20/05/2020**  
**REVISION DATE: 15/07/2020; 20/10/20; 10/11/20; 11/01/2021; 19/07/2021; 27/01/2022**

1. What are the hazards? (investigate by observation; interview and research. Don't forget long term hazards)	2. Who might be harmed and how? (think about member's of the public, contractors and vulnerable groups)	3. What are we already doing? (do existing controls make harm less likely/serious)	4. What further action is necessary? (risks must be controlled "so far as is reasonably practicable)	5. How will you put the assessment into action?		
				Action by whom	Action when	Done
<p><b>Exposure to coronavirus.</b></p> <p>Covid-19 is contracted by transmission of the virus from an infected person to another through:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inhalation of contaminated droplets or aerosols exhaled by an infected person</li> <li>hand to mouth/nose/eyes contact after touching surfaces (including skin) contaminated with saliva or faeces from infected persons.</li> </ul>	<p>Employees, visitors to SDC premises, contractors (including delivery drivers, cleaners, maintenance personnel), volunteer workers (e.g. canal project volunteers and volunteers supporting the Council's efforts to provide additional support to residents during the epidemic).</p> <p>Employees, contractors and members of the public involved in work away from SDC sites (home visits and visits to other business premises).</p> <p>Particularly vulnerable groups include elderly people (over 70), pregnant women, those with underlying health conditions.</p>	<p>Reducing the risk of infection by:-</p> <p><b><u>Self-isolation measures</u></b></p> <p>All employees and volunteers are advised to follow current government guidance and self-isolate immediately when required to do so. Guidance on what you should do if you have symptoms of Covid, test positive or have been in close contact with a case can be found on the <a href="#">hub</a>.</p> <p>All staff advised to self-isolate in accordance with PHE guidance are currently paid in full and not required to work outside their home.</p> <p><b><u>Working from SDC sites</u></b></p> <p>Under the Government's Plan A a managed return to SDC workplaces is in progress. Discuss return to work with your manager. SDC buildings are operated in line with the government's "<a href="#">Covid-Secure</a>" guidelines and occupied in accordance with site specific risk assessments. Ebley Mill has been prepared to allow a reduced number of staff to work there by agreement with their Head of Service. All staff working in SDC facilities, will observe the following control measures: -</p>	<p><b><u>Vulnerable workers and Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Workers</u></b></p> <p>Employees and volunteers who are at <a href="#">higher risk from coronavirus</a> and are not fully vaccinated to work from home if possible. Otherwise employees should discuss their working arrangements with their line managers and strictly adhere to SDC Covid-secure procedures. Employees should minimise their contact with other people and 2m social distancing to be strictly observed indoors and outdoors. Managers should keep a record of their discussions with vulnerable employees.</p>			

	<p>Other groups at higher risk include older workers (60+) and people from some Black, Asian or minority ethnicity (BAME) backgrounds</p>	<p><b><u>Limiting Virus Transmission (SDC sites)</u></b></p> <p>Reduce the risk of transmission of the virus between individuals in any indoor work situation, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restricting the number of staff in any occupied office spaces to allow desks to be configured (or unoccupied) to ensure 2m separation.</li> <li>• Issuing guidance and reminders to staff to avoid close contact when moving around buildings.</li> <li>• Minimise the mixing of staff from different teams and work areas.</li> <li>• One person per lift journey.</li> <li>• Discourage social gathering around kitchenettes and “tea making clubs”.</li> <li>• Implement procedures for the protection of first aiders administering first aid.</li> <li>• Use signs to remind people to follow covid secure procedures.</li> <li>• Close or restrict communal eating areas.</li> <li>• All staff must wear a face covering whilst moving around inside buildings (but not whilst seated 2m from other people) and when in face to face conversation with colleagues or visitors..</li> <li>• Erection of transparent “sneeze screens” in reception areas, interview areas, workstations facing each other with &lt;2m separation.</li> <li>• Defined number of customers permitted in reception and activity areas. Queue management systems in place. Provide signage to aid customer compliance.</li> <li>• Ensure all rooms occupied by more than one person are adequately ventilated in accordance with <a href="#">HSE recommendations</a>.</li> <li>• Monitor CO2 levels in any rooms where there is limited natural or mechanical ventilation.</li> <li>• Employees required to keep doors and windows open when necessary to ensure adequate ventilation.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Covid-secure Buildings</u></b></p> <p>Implement appropriate hygiene measures in workplaces, having regard to the relevant government guidance, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if a suspected case has been at work within 48hrs of their symptoms starting implement enhanced cleaning of the work area and detailed cleaning of their workstation (or close off the work area for 72hrs).</li> <li>• Remove shared hand-contact surfaces such as touch screens, keyboards and children’s play equipment from reception areas ensure touch surfaces are regularly disinfected</li> <li>• Provide hand-sanitiser for visitors to reception areas.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Volunteer Work</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop procedures for activities carried out by volunteer workers.</li> <li>• Make enquiries to try to identify any vulnerable volunteers and emphasise covid-secure arrangements.</li> <li>• Supervisors to brief volunteers on covid-secure procedures before they start work.</li> <li>• Volunteers to be asked to disclose any covid symptoms or recent contact with cases.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Event Management</u></b></p> <p>Events that form part of the normal business of an SDC venue should form part of the site’s risk assessment. One-off events for more than 30 people should be subject to a specific risk assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an adequate number of trained Marshall’s to encourage observance of precautions</li> <li>• Avoid open invitations. Place a cap on numbers.</li> <li>• Take contact details for attendees (use NHS QR code).</li> <li>• Provide hand hygiene facilities</li> </ul>			
--	---	---	--	--	--	--

		<p><b><u>Limiting Virus Transmission (visiting homes, businesses and sites)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Corporate procedures have been developed to ensure social distancing and hygiene and arrangements are implemented.</li><li>• Restricting visits to homes and other businesses to activities that cannot be conducted remotely. Avoid entering premises if possible and conduct “door-step” interviews.</li><li>• Where it is necessary for employees to visit people in their homes or business, they should make contact before entering the premises and determine if anyone inside has symptoms of Covid-19 or is self-isolating in accordance with government guidelines; is or is in a vulnerable group and discuss the precautions required (see also notes on PPE below). If possible, occupants should be encouraged to remain in a room separate to where the officer is working.</li><li>• Ensure rooms occupied by other people are well ventilated throughout the visit.</li><li>• Unless there is an imminent risk to occupants, staff should not enter the homes of people who have symptoms of Covid-19 or who are self-isolating; wait until the PHE recommended self-isolation period has elapsed.</li><li>• Maintain physical distancing indoors as much as practicable.</li><li>• Use remote communications to keep face to face contact as short as possible (ideally less than 15 minutes). Conduct meetings in a well ventilated space. Leave if other people will not maintain adequate separation.</li><li>• Always wear a face covering when working indoors with other people. Ask others to do the same and keep a supply of disposable face coverings to give to others if necessary).</li><li>• Handle face coverings with freshly sanitised hands (or use individually wrapped coverings).</li><li>• Only one member of staff to travel in any one vehicle. Where it is necessary for staff to meet on site they must travel separately.</li><li>• Procedures have been developed for the sheltered housing schemes (e.g. use of communal spaces, management of visitors and cases amongst residents).</li></ul>				
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

		<p><b><u>Hygiene control measures (SDC sites)</u></b></p> <p><b>Cleaning and disinfection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaners to prioritise the cleaning and disinfection of hand contact surfaces such as door handles and push plates; handrails; switches; taps and toilet facilities.</li> <li>• Hand sanitiser dispensers available for staff and visitors and disinfectant wipes provided (to enable staff to clean their personal equipment and workstations).</li> <li>• Staff advised to wash hands regularly for 20 secs especially before eating, drinking, smoking or preparing food; after using toilet facilities and on entering or leaving the workplace. Poster prompts on display at key locations in buildings.</li> <li>• Staff advised to avoid touching their face and eyes and to catch cough and sneezes in a tissue.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Hygiene control measures (visiting homes, businesses and sites)</u></b></p> <p><b>Hand hygiene</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make use of any suitable handwashing facilities with soap, hot water on site. Staff provided with disposable paper towels (facilities on vehicles provided where practicable).</li> <li>• Hand sanitiser provided where washing facilities are not always readily accessible. Disposable nitrile gloves provided.</li> <li>• Disinfectant wipes provided for cleaning car touch points and equipment.</li> <li>• Avoid sharing hand tools and equipment without thorough cleaning and disinfection between users.</li> <li>• Staff advised to wash hands regularly for 20 secs especially before eating, drinking, smoking or preparing food; after using toilet facilities and on entering or leaving the sites.</li> <li>• Staff advised to avoid touching their face and eyes and to catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue.</li> <li>• Staff should clean any areas which they have touched regularly with their hands during the visit with disinfectant wipes.</li> </ul>	<p>Managers should check that staff have adequate supplies of materials during one to ones and team meetings.</p>			
--	--	---	---	--	--	--

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers to disinfect steering wheel, gear stick, control stalks and door handles with disinfectant wipes before and after each use and regularly during the day.</li> <li>• Procurement procedures are in place to ensure adequate stocks of hand sanitiser, cleaning materials, disposable gloves and face masks/coverings are maintained (without unnecessary stock-piling).</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Vaccination and Testing</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>All employees, volunteers and contractors are actively encouraged to be fully vaccinated as soon as they are eligible and</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>take a lateral flow test twice a week when working away from home</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Take a lateral flow test if you expect to visit indoor crowded spaces or vulnerable people.</u></b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>(NB: if a test is positive notify your manager and follow current government guidelines).</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Case Monitoring and Contact Tracing.</u></b></p> <p><b>Monitoring suspected and confirmed cases</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees with symptoms instructed to immediately self-isolate and call NHS test and trace and Goodshape (who can provide clinical advice) and liaise with HR.</li> <li>• Employees without symptoms who have a positive LFD test result should follow current government guidelines on self-isolation and testing.</li> <li>• Vaccinated employees who are advised by NHS test and trace that they have been in contact with an infected person to take daily LFD tests in accordance with government guidance and notify their manager.</li> <li>• Any case who had been at work, outside their home, within 48 hours of symptoms commencing to be reported to Safety Adviser, immediately, on incident form SO1.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Case Management</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain suitable records of staff, visitors and customers present in SDC buildings at any given time to assist NHS test and trace to identify possible contacts of infectious people.</li> <li>• Field officers should keep contact details of anyone they come into close contact with whilst at work.</li> <li>• If a suspected case has been in close contact with anyone at work, within 48hrs of symptoms starting, the line manager should investigate and consider asking SDC contacts to stay at home until the results of the tests are known.</li> <li>• Cases should take advice from NHS track and trace before returning to work and notify Goodshape and HR.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>RPE and face coverings</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide face shields for members of staff who need to work in close proximity to co-workers or public (e.g. first aiders).</li> </ul> <p><i>NB: face shields/visors are not generally a suitable substitute for a face covering that covers the nose and mouth but can offer an additional layer of protection for staff performing close contact services.</i></p>			
--	--	---	---	--	--	--

		<p><b><u>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</u></b></p> <p><b>Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPE is not considered necessary for the majority of face to face work where it is possible to maintain 2m separation.</li> <li>• Staff should wear a face covering when meeting people indoors and encourage others to do the same. Social distancing must also be observed.</li> <li>• RPE may be necessary if it is unavoidable to enter the home of someone who has symptoms of Covid-19 or is self-isolating following contact with a suspected case. In this case a close fitting filtering face piece, equivalent to FFP3, must be used. Social distancing must also be observed.</li> <li>• Procurement procedures are in place to ensure adequate stocks of PPE are maintained (without unnecessary stock-piling).</li> <li>• Provide suitable, washable face coverings for staff who visit premises where social distancing may be difficult to maintain</li> </ul> <p><b>Protective Clothing</b> (eye protection and cover-alls)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eye protection and cover-alls will only be required if it is necessary to enter the home of someone who has symptoms of Covid-19 or is self-isolating following contact with a suspected case.</li> <li>• Managers must ensure that training and procedures are put in place to ensure the correct specification, use and disposal of PPE when required. (Tenant Services have developed a procedure that can be adopted by others).</li> </ul> <p><b>Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and refresher training for staff on the control measures taken to mitigate risks and the steps employees can take to protect themselves and others.</li> <li>• Unit managers to keep a record of the training provided to employees and volunteers on the covid-secure arrangements in place.</li> </ul>	<p><b>First Aid</b></p> <p>A separate corporate risk assessment has been prepared for First Aiders.</p> <p>Training materials are available on the <a href="#">Hub</a>.</p>			
--	--	--	---	--	--	--

<p>Consequential hazards due to changes in normal procedures and available services as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Including:- Fire safety; Legionella in water systems and Home working</p>	<p>Employees, contractors, members of the public, emergency service personnel.</p> <p>Fires and fire safety risks in unoccupied buildings may go undetected leading to hazards for emergency services; Unused water systems may lead to growth of legionella and its distribution when the building is reoccupied; Increased homeworking may result in postural problems associated with improvised DSE workstations and stress, anxiety and depression from isolation.</p>	<p><b><u>Revised Fire Safety Risk Assessments for Unoccupied Buildings</u></b></p> <p>Facilities managers and service managers to review any changes required to control risk from fire when buildings are largely unoccupied.</p> <p><b><u>Revised Legionella Risk Assessment for Unoccupied Buildings.</u></b></p> <p>Facilities managers and service managers to review any changes required to their legionella control plan when water systems are unused for long periods. Maintain normal control regime where possible or consider draining down the system.</p> <p><b><u>Systems to Ensure Planned Preventive Maintenance</u></b></p> <p>Facilities managers and service managers to review procedures for planned preventive maintenance and consider bringing forward statutory safety and maintenance checks/inspections (to take into account increased lead times in obtaining specialist services).</p> <p><b><u>Using Display Screen Equipment at Home</u></b></p> <p>Employees provided with guidance on the Hub on setting up a DSE workstation at home and adapting domestic tables and chairs to ensure good posture. Employees to discuss any problems with their line manager in the first instance. Staff advised to take regular breaks and how to obtain IT assistance. Employees have been provided with essential equipment such as separate screen, keyboard, mouse and cables.</p> <p><b><u>Stress, Anxiety and Depression Associated with Isolation</u></b></p> <p>HR published guidance and advice on the Hub on the manager's role in keeping in touch; including regular video conferencing with staff. Employees to discuss any problems with their line manager in the first instance but a counselling service is available for staff who require additional support.</p>	<p>Managers will ensure any changes are made to procedures and any additional controls required are implemented and communicated to relevant members staff.</p> <p>Provide remote DSE assessments for staff who have difficulty and make arrangements for staff to obtain additional equipment as necessary. (e.g. a suitable chair, foot rest).</p> <p>Introduce reduced numbers of staff into offices and other workplaces. Rotate staff between home and workplace to avoid individuals experiencing long periods of isolation at home.</p>			
---	---	---	--	--	--	--