



## **GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

# **POLICY ON CONTROLLING THE RISKS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES**

## **Revision 002 – March 2023**

### **Introduction**

All employees/councillors may be at risk of infection, or of spreading infection. Micro-organisms such as bacteria and viruses can be spread if employees/councillors do not take adequate precautions. It is therefore important that strict hygiene precautions are observed.

Our rules<sup>1</sup> on controlling the risks of infectious diseases must always be followed. However, there may be times when it is more important than ever that they are strictly followed, for example, during the outbreak of a disease.

In order to restrict and reduce the risk of infection in the workplace, the Council will:

- have systems in place that assess the risk of and aid in the prevention, detection and control of, the risk of infection;
- take steps to ensure sufficient resources are available to secure effective prevention and control of infection;
- take steps to ensure employees, councillors, contractors and other persons who directly or indirectly provide work are provided with suitable information, instruction, training and supervision in the precautions to follow;
- take steps to ensure that information is obtained from and shared with other businesses;
- take steps to ensure an appropriate standard of cleanliness and hygiene is maintained throughout the premises and that the premises are maintained in good physical repair and condition;
- take steps to ensure appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained in relation to equipment;
- take steps to ensure that a suitable cleaning schedule is in place and followed;
- take steps to ensure there is suitable and sufficient hand washing facilities and antimicrobial hand rubs where appropriate;
- take steps to ensure suitable information on infections is provided to visitors, including the importance of hand washing by visitors;

- take steps to ensure information regarding infection is passed on to any other person, as necessary;
- take steps to ensure individuals who develop an infection are identified promptly;
- inform the local health protection unit of any outbreaks or serious incidents relating to infection;
- take steps to ensure that all employees/councillors co-operate with our control of infection procedures;
- cancel non-essential travel to affected areas or premises where a suspect case is known;
- cancel non-essential training sessions;
- deal with clients/customers by phone and email and other mediums where possible
- if face to face meetings must take place, ensure that facilities are suitable to minimise the spread of infection eg allowing a distance of more than one metre between participants, and
- consider whether employees may work from home.

## Procedure

The Council will apply the below infection outbreak procedure to control the risk of infectious diseases in the workplace:

- strongly recommend that employees/councillors follow any Government guidance published on self-isolation/quarantine;
- encourage employees/councillors to report symptoms of infectious diseases;
- take steps to ensure that employees/councillors who have infectious disease symptoms do not come to work;
- prioritise cleaning, paying particular attention to the cleaning and disinfecting of toilets, handles, support handrails, taps and wash basins;
- take steps to ensure that employees/councillors pay strict attention to infection control procedures, in particular to the washing of hands and the wearing of protective clothing if required;
- provide and use antibacterial hand wash in all hand washing areas;
- inform visitors of the outbreak and discourage unnecessary visits, and
- receive external advice, if necessary.

## Review

This Policy on controlling the risks of infectious diseases, was presented to the Finance and Policy Committee on 20 March 2023, for approval and adoption, minute no. 507d. Future reviews will be done bi-annually or when there are changes to current legislation, whichever is the sooner.

Signed: (Mayor of Gillingham)

Date:

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<sup>i</sup> Please refer to page 30 of the Council's Health and Safety Handbook