

# TOVIL PARISH COUNCIL



## 17. INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

REVIEWED: 20.4.2023

MINUTE REF: 183/22

### INTRODUCTION

Tovil Parish Council actively seeks to protect the Councillors, staff, and volunteers working for and on behalf of the Council. The Parish Council also actively seeks to protect members of the public attending its meetings, using its facilities or attending events organised by it. As such, following any current Public Health England (PHE) and Government guidelines, the following Policy applies to any infectious disease, Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) or High Consequence Infectious Disease (HCID) as defined by PHE.

This Policy sets out the general principles and approach that Tovil Parish Council will follow in respect of an outbreak in the United Kingdom with an imminent threat of infection in the Parish of Tovil.

### SCOPE OF POLICY

The main areas of concern for Tovil Parish Council with respect to infectious diseases, PHEIC and HCID are:

- Remaining effective as a Council
- The safety and health of Councillors, staff, volunteers and members of the public.

### ACTIVATION OF THE POLICY

This Policy will be activated when;

- There is an active outbreak of an infectious disease or HCID in the United Kingdom with an imminent threat of infection in the Parish of Tovil and its activation is resolved in a meeting of Tovil Parish Council.

OR

- The Government of the United Kingdom suspends all Public Meetings and/or the Council are unable to meet due to restrictions put in place by the Government for health reasons.

### DEACTIVATION OF THE POLICY

This Policy is considered to be deactivated when;

- The imminent threat of infection in the Parish of Tovil has passed **AND**

- Its deactivation is resolved at a meeting of the Council **AND**
- The Government of the United Kingdom has lifted the suspension of all public meetings and/or restrictions on gathering are lifted.

**DEFINITION OF HIGH CONSEQUENCE INFECTIOUS DISEASE**

A HCID is defined as;

- an acute infectious disease
- typically has a high case-fatality rate
- may not have effective prophylaxis or treatment
- often difficult to recognise and detect rapidly
- ability to spread in the community and within healthcare settings
- requires an enhanced individual, population and system response to ensure it is managed effectively, efficiently and safely

This is the current list of HCIDs as defined on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (17/06/2020)

**CONTACT HCID**

**AIRBORNE HCID**

Argentine Haemorrhagic Fever  
(Junin Virus)

Andes Virus Infection (Hantavirus)

Bolivian Haemorrhagic Fever  
(Muachupo Virus)

Avian Influenza A H7N9 and H5N1

Crimean Congo Haemorrhagic Fever  
(CCHF)

Avian Influenza AH5N6 and H7N7

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome  
(MERS)

Lassa Fever

Monkeypox

Lujo Virus Disease

Nipah Virus Infection

Marburg Virus Disease (MVD)

Pneumonic Plague (Yersinia pestis)

Severe Fever with  
Thrombocytopenia

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome  
(SARS)

At any such time as a new disease is classified as HCID, it shall be treated as if it were in the list above and this Policy shall apply.

## **DEFINITION OF A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines a PHEIC in The International Health Regulations 2005

to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease; and

to potentially require a coordinated international response". This definition implies a situation that: is serious, unusual or unexpected; carries implications for public health beyond the affected State's national border; and may require immediate international action.

## **ACTIONS WHEN THE POLICY IS ACTIVATED**

During an active outbreak the Council will delegate powers to decide matters relating to finance, planning and administration to the Proper Officer (The Clerk) if necessary. If the Proper Officer is unable to carry out their duties, then the Deputy Clerk will be the delegated authority.

The Clerk will consult with two Councillors before making decisions; during an active outbreak this will be done by email.

No appointments will be permitted in the office with members of the public; all queries will be dealt with by telephone or email.

## **PUBLIC MEETINGS**

When this Policy becomes activated, all Public Meetings will be suspended. When legislation allows the Council to meet virtually, the Clerk will keep the Council informed of updates.

If urgent business should arise outside the powers delegated to the Clerk, then a round robin email system will be used. The Clerk will send out an email with the proposed motion and all Councillors will need to respond by clicking reply all. This will ensure transparency.

## **DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

To allow the Council to continue functioning there will be a scheme of delegation put in place; this will be used in the event that the Chairman and Vice Chairman are uncontactable. It may be necessary for the Council to amend Policies and Standing Orders.

Any decisions made under delegated authority will be submitted for ratification by Full Council.

## **LOCKDOWN**

In the event of a national lockdown the Parish Office will close to everyone with exception of the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and the Chairman of the Parish Council or in the case the

Chairman is unable to carry out his duties through illness the office will be open to the acting Chairman listed in the scheme of delegation. If the Proper Officer or the Chairman have symptoms of a HCID/PHEIC/Infectious Disease, then they will not access the building or the office.

**CURRENT COVID-19 PROCEDURE**

There is currently no legal guidance in place to comply with, Tovil Parish Council ask that caution is exercised. If you have symptoms of or have tested positive for Covid-19 (or other respiratory illness) the Council asks you either to refrain from visiting the office or attending meetings. If you have to come into the building for any reason then please wear a face covering and maintain social distancing.

**REVIEW OF POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed by the Clerk monthly and any amendments brought to the Full Council for approval.

**CHAIRMAN.....**

**DATE.....**