

WEMBDON PARISH COUNCIL

High Consequence Infectious Disease Policy

Introduction

Wembdon Parish Council actively seeks to protect the Councillors, Volunteers and Staff working for and on behalf of the council and its activities. As such and following any current Public Health England (PHE) and government guidelines, the following policy applies to any High Consequence Infectious Disease (HCID) as defined by PHE.

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

Scope of the policy

The main areas of concern for Wembdon Parish Council with respect to HCIDs are:

- Remaining an effective council
- The Safety and Health of Councillors, the Clerk, Contractors, Volunteers and Members of Public.

Activation of the policy

This policy is considered to be activated when;

- There is an active outbreak of a HCID in the United Kingdom with an imminent threat of infection in the Parish of Wembdon
AND
- Its activation is resolved in a meeting of the Wembdon Parish Council.
OR
- The government of the United Kingdom suspends all public meetings.

Deactivation of the policy

This policy is considered to be deactivated when;

- The imminent threat of infection in the Parish of Wembdon has passed
AND
- Its deactivation is resolved in a meeting of the Wembdon Parish Council.
OR
- The government of the United Kingdom has reinstated all public meetings.

Definition of High Consequence Infectious Disease

A HCID is defined as an acute infectious disease which typically has a high case-fatality rate; may not have effective prophylaxis or treatment; is often difficult to recognise and detect rapidly; can spread in the community and within healthcare

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settings and requires an enhanced individual, population and system response to ensure it is managed effectively, efficiently and safely.

Matters relating to staff – The Clerk

Wembdon Council has no official offices. The only employee, the Clerk, works from home. The public may only visit the Clerk by appointment. During any active outbreak of a HCID in the UK, no appointments will be permitted. The clerk will not encounter the public during working hours, at the Clerk's home.

In the event of a HCID outbreak the National Joint Council for local government services (NJC) will issue guidance for employers which the council will follow.

Public Meetings

It is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1972, that council business shall be conducted at public meetings of the council and any committees.

Councillors and other Volunteers can choose to not attend public meetings. As an officer of the council, the Clerk cannot choose to not attend meetings.

To protect the health of all attendees, public meetings are suspended during the active period of this policy.

Delegated Authority

To allow the council to operate on a minimum requirement basis, the following items are delegated to the Clerk for the duration of the activation of this policy.

Planning applications.

After consultation with all members of the planning committee, a summary response will be circulated to all these councillors for approval by the majority of these councillors prior to submission to Sedgemoor District Council by the Clerk.

This policy was reviewed in October 2025.

End of policy