

Chairman's Announcement for Council Meeting  
23 June 2021, 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Main Hall

Welcome to the first meeting, face to face, since March 2020 when Covid restrictions were introduced and the Coronavirus Act enabled parish councils (and others) to meet remotely using a video conferencing platform. This Act covered the period May 2020 until 6 May 2021. The Government has not extended the Act and now we are legally required to hold our meetings face to face, observing any Covid-19 restrictions currently in force, for example distancing, masks, frequent handwashing and hand sanitizer, open windows/doors, not sharing papers and pens, etc.

The Council will comply with the hiring conditions set by the Village Hall and has completed a risk assessment for the return to face to face meetings. Currently the maximum total number of people permitted in this main hall is 15 people. We have asked the village hall for this room for our Council meetings for the foreseeable future. Members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings as always but they must adhere to the rules, and to help the Council manage running the meetings whilst still complying with the Government restrictions and guidelines pertaining each month, members of the public must inform the Clerk (or Councillor for forwarding to Clerk) that they wish to attend. Information will be published on each agenda. It was hoped to hold a public meeting on 7 July so members could engage with residents on work to refurbish play area, replant trees at village green, support Witcham Community Archive Group and launch new website. However, with the Government postponing the lifting of final covid restrictions on 21 June 2021 for potentially a further 4 weeks, the Council will be reviewing this and looking at further options. People might also wish to take one of the free lateral covid tests up to 48 hours before the meeting – these are available from local pharmacies, including Sutton (High Street).

No more than 15 people will be permitted in the hall at any one time including the 6 Councillors, Clerk, and the County and District Councillors. People might want to consider attending the meetings just for the items for which they have an interest, depending on numbers. Hence our request that people contact the Clerk at least 48 hours beforehand so we can juggle and optimize a fair solution for everyone.

We hope you will all bear with us to help protect the public, Council members, staff and visitors at this difficult time. Soon everyone will have had the opportunity of having the two vaccinations (and any boosters) so that with care our lives can return back to some degree of normality and we are able to enjoy our usual freedoms.

As usual we are required to take a note of members of the public attending meetings. Please could you let us have your name and residential street together with interest on which item on the agenda tonight. Has anyone any questions please?

Chairman