

**WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Full Council**

**Covid-19 Government Recovery Strategy**

**1. Background:**

- 1.1 On Monday 11 May 2020, the Government released **OUR PLAN TO REBUILD:** The UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy with a supplementary Guidance for Safer Public Spaces on 13<sup>th</sup> May (already circulated).
- 1.2 Responding to the advice of Government scientists, on 7 March those with symptoms were asked to self-isolate for 7 days. On 16 March, the Government introduced shielding for the most vulnerable and called on the British public to cease non-essential contact and travel. On 18 March, the Government announced the closure of schools. On 20 March entertainment, hospitality and indoor leisure venues were closed. And on 23 March the Government took decisive steps to introduce the Stay at Home guidance.

1.3 From this point, the Parish Council issued notices, taped up and locked play areas where possible. The public meetings were postponed and the Parish Council’s office staff began to work from home.

1.4 In response to this, the Parish Council has restarted its public meetings through an online platform and has worked with its contracted workforce to agree essential services and these are currently being delivered through a reduced workforce. Parish Councillors are involved in local responses and volunteering, and, the Parish Council is linked with Swindon Borough Council to support any action specific to West Swindon.

**2. Moving Forward – the recovery strategy:**

2.1 The Strategy sets out 5 tests that must be met to ease restriction measures through phases:

- 1 Protect the NHS’s ability to cope. We must be confident that we are **able to provide sufficient critical care and specialist treatment** right across the UK.
- 2 See a **sustained and consistent fall in the daily death rates** from COVID-19 so we are confident that we have moved beyond the peak.
- 3 Reliable data from SAGE showing that **the rate of infection is decreasing to manageable levels** across the board.
- 4 Be confident that **the range of operational challenges, including testing capacity and PPE, are in hand**, with supply able to meet future demand.
- 5 Be confident that **any adjustments to the current measures will not risk a second peak of infections** that overwhelms the NHS.

- 2.2 This document sets out a framework for movement into *Phase two: smarter controls*. Throughout this phase, people will need to minimise the spread of the disease through continuing good hygiene practices: hand washing, social distancing and regular disinfecting of surfaces touched by others. There are very clear indications that these measures will be in place for some time.
- 2.3 Over the coming months, the Government will introduce a range of adjustments to current social distancing controls, timing these carefully according to both the current spread of the virus and the Government's ability to ensure safety. These will happen in "steps". Steps in the current phase are as follows:
- Workers should continue to work from home rather than their normal physical workplace, wherever possible.
  - All workers who cannot work from home should travel to work if their workplace is open.
  - Anyone who has symptoms, however mild, or is in a household where someone has symptoms, should not leave their house to go to work.
  - Everybody (including critical workers) should continue to avoid public transport wherever possible.
  - Social distancing guidance on public transport must be followed.
  - Face-coverings can help reduce the risk of transmission in some circumstances
  - People can now also spend time outdoors subject to: not meeting up with any more than one person from outside their household; continued compliance with social distancing guidelines to remain two metres (6ft) away
  - Playgrounds, outdoor gyms remain closed
  - People may drive to outdoor open spaces
  - Clinically vulnerable people should continue to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside their households, but do not need to be shielded
- 2.4 Outdoor sports courts can be reopened but social distancing measures apply. The Parish Council could re-open the courts at Westlea Park, Middleleaze, Bloomsbury and Sparcells.
- 2.5 There is no specific reference to when gyms and libraries may reopen – this would release access to the Parish Office. However, there is reference which says *it is likely that reopening indoor public spaces and leisure facilities (such as gyms and cinemas), .. and personal care establishments where close contact is inherent (like beauty salons) may only be fully possible significantly later depending on the reduction in numbers of infections. It is likely that this will not be before 4 July 2020.*
- 3. Recommendation**
- 3.1 That Council considers the report and identifies any further action required by the Parish Council, in particular, additional signage and reopening of outdoor courts.

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