

Seascale Parish Council

HIGH CONSEQUENCE INFECTIOUS DISEASE POLICY

1. Introduction

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

2. Scope of the policy

- 2.1. The main areas of concern for Seascale Parish Council with respect to HClDs are:
 - Remaining an effective council
 - Safety & Health of councillors, contractors, staff, volunteers and members of public.

3. Activation of the policy

- 3.1. 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 Seascale Parish Council **and**
 - At least 3 councillors have requested its activation to the Chair, and subsequently notified the Clerk, or the Chair plus 2 councillors have requested its activation to the Clerk, or its activation is resolved in a meeting of the Seascale Parish Council OR
 - The government of the United Kingdom suspends all public meetings.

4. Deactivation of the policy

- 4.1. This policy is considered to be deactivated, when
 - When the imminent threat of infection in the Parish of Seascale Parish Council has passed **and**
 - A minimum of 4 councillors have requested public meetings be recommenced **and**
 - The government of the United Kingdom has reinstated all public meetings.

5. Definition of High Consequence Infectious Disease

- 5.1. A HCID is defined as
 - 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

- 5.2. The current list of HCIDs as defined on <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/high-consequence-infectious-diseases-hcid#list-of-high-consequence-infectious-diseases> as updated on 15/01/2026

Contact HCIDs	Airborne HCIDs
Argentine haemorrhagic fever (Junin virus)	Andes virus infection (hantavirus)
Chapare virus infection	avian influenza A(H7N9) and A(H5N1)
Crimean Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)	avian influenza A(H5N6) and A(H7N7)
Ebola disease (EBOD)	Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)
Lassa fever	Nipah virus infection
Lujo virus disease	pneumonic plague (Yersinia pestis)
Machupo virus infection	severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)
Marburg virus disease (MARD)	
severe fever with thrombocytopenia syndrome (SFTS)	

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

6. Matters relating to staff – The Clerk

- 6.1. Seascale Parish Council has no official offices, as such the only employee, the Clerk, works from home. The public may not visit the Clerk at their home address.
- 6.2. The church hall, or any other public location used for Parish Council meetings is the 2nd normal place of work for the Clerk. This is dealt with in Section 7.
- 6.3. 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.

7. Public Meetings

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. Councillors and volunteers can choose to not attend public meetings. As an officer of the council, the Clerk cannot choose to not attend meetings.
- 7.3. Considering the councillors and members of public that attend meetings, there is a high percentage of attendees that might be considered “high risk” with respect to all of the HCIDs listed in Section 0. As such, to protect the health of all attendees, public meetings will be suspended during the active period of this policy.

8. Delegated Authority

- 8.1. 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.
 - 8.1.1. Planning applications, after consultation with all councillors, a summary response will be submitted by the Clerk.
 - 8.1.2. Finance
 - 8.1.2.1. all standard recurring payments listed as line items on the budget will be paid by the RFO at the appropriate time to prevent any late charges, such as salaries, printing costs, refuse collection, licences and IT services etc.

- 8.1.2.2. all payments to be authorised by a minimum of 2 councillors by e-mail prior to payment.
- 8.1.2.3. All payments will be formally authorised by the full council at the next full council meeting.
- 8.1.2.4. Where this policy is activated over the end of the financial year, the RFO will prepare the end of year accounts in accordance with normal procedures and circulate to all of the councillors. On the acceptance of a minimum of 4 councillors, they will be signed by the Clerk and Chair as applicable for submission to the external and internal auditors. The accounts will be accepted by resolution at the next full council meeting.
- 8.1.3. Responses to other communications. The Clerk will circulate at the earliest opportunity, any communication from any 3rd Parties which would normally be presented at a meeting for consideration by the council. The clerk will circulate the summary response to the full council prior to responding to the 3rd Party.
- 8.1.4. In accordance with LGA 1972, where this policy is activated during a meeting of the council the meeting will be adjourned. Using the delegated authority as detailed in 8.1.1 to 8.1.3, the Clerk will endeavour to close out as much of the remaining agenda, the results of which will be reported to the council after the adjournment when the rest of the agenda is considered.

9. Review of the policy

- 9.1. This policy will be reviewed annually.