Article for Central email, Covid newsletter, Covid intranet page – dates tbc based on sign off.

# Be Kind and Considerate as we learn to live with Covid

On Monday (21 February), Central Government announced it’s living with Covid-19 strategy. These plans lifted all remaining Covid-19 restrictions in England at the end of February including the legal requirement to self-isolate if you test positive or are a contact of a positive case.

We can now update what that means for us. From today (<date email to be sent>) most of our Covid secure measures will be removed. This means you can now come into your workplace should you wish. Please discuss with your manager how you would like to organise your hybrid working and how frequently you would like to go to your workplace.

We recognise that colleagues may feel nervous about the restrictions ending, please be kind and considerate to each other. Go at your own pace and have conversations with colleagues and your manager about what you feel comfortable with.

**Covid secure measures remaining:**

* **If unwell do not come into the workplace** – nobody will thank you for spreading any illnesses so, please work from home if you are able
* **Workstations -** Sanitiser stations will remain so please continue to clean your workstation at the beginning of the day
* **Hand sanitiser** – will remain, please continue to use when entering the workplace and through the day

**Covid secure measures being removed:**

* **Face Masks** – are no longer mandatory to wear, however please continue to use if you prefer and consider using one for indoor crowded spaces
* **Lateral Flow tests** – are no longer required before entering the workplace
* **Self-isolation** – whilst no longer mandatory if you feel unwell you must not come into the workplace
* **Seating arrangements** – social distancing rules will be removed however if you feel more comfortable continuing to social distance let your line manager and colleagues know
* **Meeting rooms** – social distancing maximum room levels will be removed however if you feel more comfortable continuing to social distance let your line manager and colleagues know
* **One-way systems** – will be removed

Whist the laws for Covid-19 have been removed it doesn’t mean the pandemic is over; we still need to take precautions to help reduce case levels and protect each other and our community. There are some very simple and important steps that we can all do to help this:

* **If unwell, it’s essential you stay home** – even if it is common cold and not Covid-19 you may still have an illness which could be passed on to other people. Many common illnesses, like the flu, are spread from one person to another and can still pose a larger infection risk.
* **Wash your hands regularly and cover coughs and sneezes** - Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day. Regular hand washing is an effective way to reduce your risk of catching illnesses.
* **Open windows to keep the air circulating** - this is especially important when seeing members of the public you wouldn’t normally meet or when visiting someone vulnerable.
* **Consider wearing a face mask** – if in crowded indoor spaces

**IMPORTANT:** Directorates may have different guidance if you work with vulnerable people. Please speak to your manager to clarify.

**Hotdesks at Shute End**

All directorates have their own hot desk zone and allocated numbers of desks which was set up as part of Together Again. Colleagues wishing to come into the office need to agree with their manager first to ensure their team does not exceed this allocation.

Hot desks should be left clear, with no equipment or personal items left on them, except for the computer leads. When you first arrive, please clean your workstation, (desk, chair arms), using the product found at the cleaning stations. At the end of the day please leave the hotdesk clear and the leads behind for the next person.

Colleagues should sit in their own directorate hot desk zone, if there isn’t space then check with other teams if you can use one of their hotdesks. Note that the priority allocation belongs to the directorate whose zone it is.