This assessment reflects the UK Government Guidance on Working Safely During COVID-19 in Offices and Contact Centres at **https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres** and should be used in conjunction with existing Risk Assessments.

These are not explicit requirements that need to be implemented across each premises but should be used as guidance and good practice. The site-specific risk assessment should be completed for each premise and should include the specific control measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees and others for the premises. If for any reason none of the control measures can be put in place for a specific risk Health & Safety must be contacted.

This Covid-19 risk assessment should supplement your existing risk assessments.

Please consider some of these steps below before completing this risk assessment:

	Managing risk To reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority.	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
1.1	Enable working from home as a first option. Where this is not possible, workplaces should make every reasonable effort to comply with the social distancing guidelines (keeping people 2m apart wherever possible).	☒	☐	
1.2	Where the social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full, in relation to a particular activity, consider whether that activity needs to continue for the business to operate, and, if so, take all the mitigating actions possible to reduce the risk of transmission between their staff.	☒	☐	
1.3	If people must work face-to-face for a sustained period with more than a small group of fixed partners, then you will need to assess whether the activity can safely go ahead. No one is obliged to work in an unsafe work environment. In your assessment you should have particular regard to whether the people doing the work are especially vulnerable to COVID-19.	☒	☐	
	Who should go to work That everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home.	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
2.1	Workers in roles critical for business and operational continuity, safe facility management, or regulatory requirements and which cannot be performed remotely.	☒	☐	

		Yes	No	Comment
2.2	Workers in critical roles which might be performed remotely, but who are unable to work remotely due to home circumstances or the unavailability of safe enabling equipment.	☒	☐	
	Protecting people who are at higher risk To protect clinically vulnerable and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
3.1	Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals have been strongly advised not to work outside the home.	☒	☐	
3.2	Clinically vulnerable individuals, who are at higher risk of severe illness, have been asked to take extra care in observing social distancing and should be helped to work from home, either in their current role or in an alternative role.	☒	☐	
3.3	Managers to refer to the Occupational Health checklist for high risk (**not extremely clinically high risk**) employees during Covid-19 pandemic 2020.	☒	☐	
	People who need to self-isolate To make sure individuals who are advised to stay at home under existing government guidance do not physically come to work. This includes individuals who have symptoms of COVID-19 as well as those who live in a household with someone who has symptoms	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
4.1	Enabling workers to work from home while self-isolating if appropriate.	☒	☐	
	Equality in the workplace To treat everyone in your workplace equally.	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
5.1	Employers also have particular responsibilities towards disabled workers and those who are new or expectant mothers.	☒	☐	
	Specific Hazards within the Service Area being risk assessed	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
6.1	Employers to ensure they include any specific hazards within their service areas which is not already covered within this template risk assessment.	☒	☐	
	Cleaning of the building	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
7.1	Managers to refer to the separate Building Cleaning Risk Assessment completed by Facilities before completing this risk assessment.	☒	☐	

South Tyneside Council

Assessment Reference Pandemic COVID-19	Site/Location All STC & STH sites and buildings			Work Activity Managing return to office work during Covid-19 pandemic						
Assessor(s) Joanne Woods	Date of Assessment 12/05/2020	Date of Previous none	Date of Review In Light of New Govt. Guidance	Level of Risk Before Controls (See risk matrix)				Level of risk After Controls (See risk matrix)		
Hazard Area/activity	Persons at Risk	Significant Risks to Health and Safety		Probability	Severity	Risk Rating	Controls and Precautions What are you doing to reduce the risk?	Probability	Severity	Residual Risk
Specific Hazards within the service area being risk assessed										
Entering and leaving work	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.		4	5	20	Guidance and advice are available via the councils web pages 1. Staggered arrival and departure times at work to reduce crowding into and out of the office. 2. Parking and bike racks available to staff, shower facilities available to staff should they wish to run, walk or cycle to work. 3. Bags available for staff's clothes and bags (no sharing). 4. Introduction of one way entry and exit points which are clearly marked. 5. Handwashing facilities, and/or hand sanitiser available at all entry and exit points.	2	5	10

						6. Door openers gadget provided to all staff to minimise risk. 7. Staff encouraged to use stairs rather than lifts, if lifts are to be used social distancing must be maintained and hand santisier where available to be used when entering and leaving the lift. 8. Clear notice at each lift call point on every floor to identify maximum occupancy. 9. Maintaining social distancing when using stairs. One set of stairs for going up and another for coming down to reduce the need for people to pass each on the stairs. 10. If this is not achievable staff informed to stick to the left-hand side when going up and consider others who may be coming the other way.			
Moving around buildings	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	4	5	20	1. Staff visiting other offices / floor plates to be discouraged. 2. Staff to only visit other parts of the building when essential. **3. No Kitchen Facilities, students to supply own food.** 4. Closed kitchen areas Maximum occupancies (1 person every 2 metres) identified on the door. 5. Vision panels in kitchen doors kept clear at all times to assist staff in identifying visually if the capacity has been exceeded without opening the door. 6. Accessing toilets restricting the number of people in depending on the size of the toilet need to be able to allow 2m distance between staff accessing the toilet and the hand washing facilities. Sign on door to confirm restrictions.	2	5	10

						7. 2 toilets, 0 urinal and 2 sinks to be in operation to ensure social distancing others to be taped out of service. Sign to be on door when occupied. 8. Floor markings/graphics where required to highlight social distancing. 9. Opportunity to create 'lanes' to corridors and open plan areas so that people keep away from others working.			
Workstations	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	4	5	20	1. Workstations assigned to one person, staff should not be hot desking. Marked to show in use. 2. Desks laid out to accommodate social distancing. 3. Staff should not be sitting face to face. 4. Desks not to be used will be taped to show out of use. 5. Workstations and work equipment to be regularly cleaned. 6. Staff to leave their desks as clear as possible so that it can be easily cleaned. 7. Staff to ensure they have completed their DSE User Assessment Checklist. 8. Managers are responsible for calculating the maximum occupancy of their offices. The maximum occupancy should be communicated with staff. 9. Sign on the office door to communicate the maximum occupancy allowed. 10. Opening of windows and doors regularly to allow fresh air into the building is encouraged.	2	5	10
Meetings	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per	4	5	20	1. Face to face meeting to be avoided. 2. Meetings to be held remotely	2	5	10

		Government guidance.				3. If face to face meeting is essential social distancing must be maintained siting of each member of the meeting to be 2m distance and not sitting face to face at the table. 4. Hand santisiers to be provided in all meeting rooms. Staff to use when entering and leaving the meeting room. 5. Meeting rooms to be well ventilated. 6. Opening of windows and doors regularly to allow fresh air into the building is encouraged. 7. Reminders in place in the meeting rooms about hygiene and social distancing. 8. Details on the door of the meeting room confirming maximum occupancy. 9. Sharing of equipment such as pens is not allowed. 10. Meeting rooms to be cleaned after each meeting. 11. Consider holding meeting outdoors (walking meeting) where the 2m social distancing will still need to observed.			
Common Areas	All staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	4	5	20	1. Introduction of one way entry and exit points which are clearly marked. 2. Handwashing facilities, and/or hand sanitiser available at all entry and exit points. 3. Break out / rest areas reconfigured to allow social distancing and reduce face to face interactions. 4. **Staff to work reduced hours eliminating the need to leave work other than the end of shift.** 5. **Reception will not be manned** – however reception/admin staff will be available on a rota in the office directly behind the reception area (1 person per day). 6. Staff provided with a safe outside space to have	2	5	10

					their breaks. 7. Staff are encourage to bring their own food and drink to work. 8. Fridges and microwaves to be taken out of service. **9. Non Smoking Site.** 10. Breaks to be staggered to prevent overcrowding in break out areas. 11. Maintaining social distancing when using stairs. One set of stairs for going up and another for coming down to reduce the need for people to pass each on the stairs. 12. **If lifts are to be used social distancing must be maintained and hand sanitiser to be used when entering and leaving the lift. – Lift out of service during this period, no current staff or students require use of lift**. 13. Clear notice at each lift call point on every floor to identify maximum occupancy. 14. Regular cleaning of all common areas. 15. Floor markings/graphics where required to highlighted social distancing. 16. Opportunity to create 'lanes' to corridors and open plan areas so that people keep away from others working. 17. Opening of windows and doors regularly to allow fresh air into the building is encouraged 18. Doors should not be wedged open where they are fire doors or security doors unless there is a door guard or mag lock fitted and checked monthly. Those doors that are not there from a fire or security aspect can be wedged open. However, these doors should be clearly identified		

						to help staff identify which doors can and cannot be wedged open. 19. Accessing toilets restricting the number of people in depending on the size of the toilet need to be able to allow 2m distance between staff accessing the toilet and the hand washing facilities. Sign on door to confirm restrictions. 20. 1 toilet, 1 urinal and 1 sink to be in operation to ensure social distancing others to be taped of service. Sign to be on door when occupied. 21. Photocopiers to be limited to one person per time. Staff advised to limit use of the photocopier and wash hands after use. Consider the use of touch screen pens when using photocopier. When scanning use feeder on top of the copier to reduce the need to lift / touch the top to access the screen. Cleaning to be more frequent			
Accidents, Security and other incidents	All Staff and visitors, contractors	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	3	5	15	1. There may be emergency incidents where social distancing is not safe to do such as staff would need to get out of the building quickly if there was a fire. Where possible social distancing will be maintained if safe to do at the assembly point. 2. During the current pandemic it cannot be guaranteed fire wardens will be available therefore the manager of the area is to take charge and ensure everyone safely leaves the building. 3. During the current pandemic it cannot be guaranteed there will be a first aider available therefore employees are aware to call emergency services for medical support by calling 999 and where possible notify their manager of the	2	5	10

							incident as soon as possible.			
							4. First aid kits – updated to include (where already not supplied) surgical masks and rubber gloves, hand sanitisers.			
							5. First aiders to be provided with the most up to date government information.			
							6. Any waste to be disposed of as per government guidance.			
							7. Providing first aid treatment during a pandemic:			
							- First aiders have been informed that where possible, it is recommended that they do not perform rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation; perform chest compressions only. (as per Resuscitation Council)			
							- In line with Government advice, First Aiders to make sure they have washed their hands or used hand sanitiser, before and after treating a casualty.			
							- First Aiders to consider cross contamination that could occur which was covered in their training.			
							8. All trained first aid personnel must exercise extreme caution when treating any injury to any party as the social distancing measure of 2 metres may have to be breached to facilitate treatment by close and direct contact			
							9. First aid personnel must assess the injured party from a distance of 2 metres and where treatment has been identified as required first aid personnel must wear latex free protective gloves and protective face masks whilst treating any type of injury or casualty and must wash hands			

						immediately after treatment has been completed. 10. If a casualty requires CPR then this should be administered by chest compressions only and not rescue breaths as adequate infection control for first aid personnel cannot be maintained.			
Managing Customers, Visitors and Contractors	All Staff, Visitors, Contractors	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	3	5	15	1. Signage displayed advising the recommendation and safety procedures in place when visit the buildings. Information to also be given before visiting if applicable i.e. on internet page, appointment letters. 2. Visits to be completed remotely where possible, reduce the need to visit other sites. 3. Visitors must wash their hands upon entering the premises or use the hand sanitiser provided. 4. Visitor times to be limited to certain times of the day. 5. Put up plexiglass screens at all points of regular interaction to further reduce the risk of infection for all parties involved, cleaning the barriers regularly. 6. If plexiglass is not feasible, consider barriers 2 metres from receptions or floor markings that customers should not cross when speaking to staff. 7. Pens and other equipment not to be shared within Reception areas, one member of staff to sign in visitors where required. 8. Number of visitors to be limited to ensure social distancing can be maintained. 9. Interactions between staff, contractors and visitors reduced and completed remotely where	2	5	10

						possible. 10. Restrict the number of visitors able to enter public Council Premises (i.e. Libraries) where necessary. 11. Clear exit and entry routes established for staff and visitors to the building. 12. Queuing lines to be marked in line with the 2m social distancing guidance. 13. Signage to ask visitors with symptoms not to enter the premises, and to remind both staff and visitors to always keep 2 metres from other people, wherever possible. 14. Staff aware of the safety information they should be providing visitors and contractors who are due to visit. 15. Waiting room furniture to be rearranged to ensure social distancing. 16. Specific area for the delivery of goods where no contact with the driver is required. 17. Non-essential visits to care facilities prohibited.			
Cleaning & Hygiene	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	4	5	20	1. Opening of windows and doors regularly to allow fresh air into the building is encouraged. 2. Paper towels provided as an alternative to hand dryers. 3. Regular cleaning of all areas especially frequently touched areas, such as door handles, access buttons. 4. Waste facilities provided across the site and frequently emptied. 5. All waste removed and disposed of at the end of each working day. 6. Social distancing measures are in place within	2	5	10

						Showers and changing areas and regular cleaning taking place throughout the day and at the end of the working day. 7. Posters and reminders to staff about hygiene around the site. 8. Ventilation and air conditioning systems have been checked and maintained. 9. Where a known or suspected case of COVID19 has been reported a full clean will be completed as per the specific guidelines given by the government. 10. Goods entering the sites to be cleaned. 11. Extra cleaning procedures in place for work vehicles.			
PPE	All Staff, Visitors, Contractors	Virus transmission.	3	5	15	1. PPE will continue to be used for the job role where it is required and been risk assessed separately. 2. Staff can wear face coverings if they feel this is necessary but is not compulsory. 3. Staff wearing face coverings are advised to: - Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and after removing it. - Avoid touching face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from hands. - Change face covering if it becomes damp or if been touching it. - Continue to wash hands regularly. - Change and wash face covering daily. - If the material is washable, wash in line with	2	5	10

						manufacturer's instructions. If it's not washable, dispose of it carefully in usual waste. - Practise social distancing wherever possible.			
Workforce management	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	3	5	15	1. Manager to follow current government and HR advice on who can return to work and who should remain at home. 2. Managers to ensure that they have a task-based risk assessment developed and cascaded through to their staff. 3. Where shift work or staff are split into teams, these will be fixed to ensure the same people mix with each other. 4. Where equipment is required to be passed to staff a drop off and pick up area will be set up to prevent unnecessary contact between staff. 5. Travelling will be minimised and remote working will be completed where possible. 6. Where travelling is required between sites only one person per vehicle, no car sharing. Where this is not possible, and staff are together in a vehicle such as mini bus social distancing should be maintained.			
Information, Instruction and Training	All Staff	Virus transmission, lack of social distancing as per Government guidance.	3	5	15	1. Staff provided with the information, instruction and training needed to safely return to the office. 2. Regular updates given to all staff when any new guidance / recommendations are introduced. 3. Where staff are located in a building not run by the Council or South Tyneside Homes notes should be shared with the landlord on Risk Assessment and respect each other's RA. 4. The Landlord should have rules for common			

						areas that they are in control of and communicate to relevant people.
						 5. Staff advised to follow Government guidance and not to leave their home if they or someone they live with has developed symptoms:
						     - A high temperature,
						     - A new, continuous cough.
						     - Loss or change to sense of smell or taste			

Mental Health & Wellbeing	All Staff	Lack of mental wellbeing	3	4	12	1. Specific intranet pages available to all staff to support their health and wellbeing with focus on their mental health. 2. Manager's guidance looking after everyone's mental health produced to help them support their colleagues. 3. Mental health first aiders in place across the organisation to help support all staff. 4. Occupational Health Service available for support. 5. In house counselling service available for staff to self-refer to. 6. HR Services available for support.			

Assessor notes:
This risk assessment will need to be continually reviewed due to the ongoing government advice and guidance. Please refer to your professional body for additional advice.

Government Guidance

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/offices-and-contact-centres
https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

Signature of Assessor(s)

Risk Matrix

South Tyneside Council

Severity / Likelihood	Non-Injury 1	Minor Injury 2	7 Day Injury 3	Major Injury 4	Fatality 5
Improbable 1	1 Low Risk	2 Low Risk	3 Low Risk	4 Low Risk	5 Low Risk
Remote 2	2 Low Risk	4 Low Risk	6 Low Risk	8 Low Risk	10 Medium Risk
Possible 3	3 Low Risk	6 Low Risk	9 Medium Risk	12 Medium Risk	15 High Risk
Probable 4	4 Low Risk	8 Low Risk	12 Medium Risk	16 High Risk	20 High Risk
Most Likely 5	5 Low Risk	10 Medium Risk	15 High Risk	20 High Risk	25 High Risk

Risk = Likelihood X Severity

The above matrix is to be used to evaluate likelihood and severity in order to come up with a standardised method of rating risks arising from a hazard. It is used in conjunction with the risk assessment pro-forma.