Coronavirus briefing w.e.f. 3rd March 2020. Please note the following briefing may be subject to change should any new advice/instructions be issued by the Government or Public Health England.

Basic hygiene

With immediate effect employees are requested to wash their hands when entering the premises and at regular intervals thereafter. On arrival to the office all employees should wipe down their immediate working space with sanitisers including telephones, computer mouse & pens. Public areas such as kitchens should also be wiped in particular door handles, kettles and cooking instruments. Please refrain from touching your eyes, nose, mouth until you have washed your hands thoroughly and again at regular intervals.

With immediate effect, 'Tea Towels' must not be used under any circumstances. All dirty cutlery and crockery should be place in the dishwasher – with the dishwasher set daily on a high temperature.

If an employee comes unwell

If someone becomes unwell in the workplace and has recently come back from an area affected by coronavirus, they should:

- get at least 2 metres (7 feet) away from other people
- go to a room or area behind a closed door, such as a sick bay or staff office
- avoid touching anything
- cough or sneeze into a tissue and put it in a bin, or if they do not have tissues, cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- use a separate bathroom from others, if possible

 The unwell person should use their own mobile phone to call either:

- for NHS advice: 111
- for an ambulance, if they're seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk: 999

The employee must tell the Chamber as soon as possible if they cannot work. It's helpful to let the Chamber know the reason and how long they are likely to be off for. Employees unfit to attend work will be paid statutory sick pay or alternatively may wish to apply for holiday to cover the sickness period.

If an employee is not sick but the Chamber tells them not to come to work

If an employee is not sick but the Chamber tells them not to come to work, they will get their usual pay. For example, if someone has returned an affected area and the Chamber

asks them not to come in. In this event, employees will be expected to work from home. Their direct line manager will set out the required work plan and any equipment needed.

If an employee needs time off work to look after someone

Employees are entitled to time off work to help someone who depends on them (a 'dependant') in an unexpected event or emergency. This would apply to situations to do with coronavirus. For example:

- if they have children they need to look after or arrange childcare for because their school has closed
- to help their child or another dependant if they're sick, or need to go into isolation or hospital. There's no statutory right to pay for this time off.

In this eventuality employees may wish to consider taking holidays to accommodate any potential loss of earnings.

If employees do not want to go to work

Some people might feel they do not want to go to work if they're afraid of catching coronavirus.

If there are genuine concerns, the Chamber will try to resolve them to protect the health and safety of its employees.

If an employee still does not want to go in, they may be able to arrange with the Chamber to take the time off as holiday or unpaid leave. Please note: The Chamber does not have to agree to this.

If someone with coronavirus comes to work

If someone with coronavirus comes to work, the workplace does not necessarily have to close.

The local Public Health England (PHE) health protection team will get in contact with the Chamber to:

- discuss the case
- identify people who have been in contact with the affected person
- carry out a risk assessment
- advise on any actions or precautions to take

If the Chamber needs to close the workplace

Currently it's very unlikely that the Chamber will need to close its offices.

However, if in the event it becomes necessary the SMT will plan for such an eventually and plan individual work schedules accordingly. In the event that there is insufficient work for mass 'home-working' please refer to your employee handbook – section 2.22 'Layoffs'.

The advice given from Public Health England is:

- **Wash your hands frequently:** Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. This kills viruses that may be on your hands.

- **Maintain social distancing:** Maintain at least 1 metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing. When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

- **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth:** Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

- **Avoid handshakes:**

- **Practice respiratory hygiene:** Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

- **If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early:** Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

- **Stay informed:** Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.

Protection measures for persons who are in or have recently visited areas where COVID-19 is spreading

- Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell even if it is with mild symptoms

- such as headache and slight runny nose, until you recover. Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow these facilities to operate more effectively and help protect you and others from possible COVID-19 and other viruses.

- If you develop fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical advice promptly as this may be due to a respiratory infection or other serious condition. Call in advance and tell your provider of any recent travel or contact with travellers.