

Ref: DPI L2250 21 22 SUOH and NATTRAN/SE/S247/3254

Princes Parade, Hythe

**Pre-Inquiry Meeting to be held at 11:00 on Tuesday 21 September 2021
at the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, CT20 2QY**

Inspector: Mr O S Woodward BA (Hons.) MA MRTPI

Programme Officer: Caroline Williams

Telephone Number: 01303 853376 Mobile: 07860 735073

Email: programme.officer@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Address: Civic Centre, Folkestone & Hythe District Council, Castle Hill Avenue,
Folkestone, CT20 2QY

Inquiry webpage: <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/princes-parade/princes-parade-inquiry-news>

Inspectors' Note – Participating at the Pre-Inquiry Meeting

Introduction

As previously announced, the Pre-Inquiry Meeting and Public Inquiry will be held in Folkestone & Hythe District Council Civic Centre (F&HDC) on the following dates:

- Tuesday September 21, 2021
- Tuesday to Friday October 19 – 22, 2021

The agenda for the Pre-Inquiry Meeting (PIM) was published on 3 September, 2021. The final agenda for the Inquiry will be published by the Inspector following the conclusion of the Pre-Inquiry Meeting and will confirm the issues to be discussed on each of the days of the Inquiry.

The Pre-Inquiry Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber with participation by those physically attending.

Observing hearing sessions

All of the inquiry sessions are public events. However, in line with the Council's Health and Safety Risk Assessment, there will be a limit on the number of attendees who will be allowed within the Council Chamber to observe. The meeting will be streamed live and will be subsequently available to view online via a link on the Council's website.

Participation by attending at the Civic Centre

As of the 19th July, Covid19 restrictions have been relaxed by HMG. This effectively ends the requirement to implement social distancing.

However to ensure safety of all involved and in preparation for the Pre-Inquiry Meeting, officers have reviewed the latest HSE guidance and the Council risk assessment for use of the council chamber.

They have undertaken a Covid-19 risk assessment of the Civic Centre, and a separate risk assessment specifically for Inquiry meetings. These set out measures, consistent with relevant legislation and Government guidance, aimed at ensuring that inquiry will be as safe as possible within current guidance from the government. Both documents will be published in the inquiry library.

Nobody should attend the meeting if they have any of the Covid-19 symptoms on the day. Furthermore, you should not attend if Government guidance¹ indicates that you should self-isolate because you have had symptoms within the last 24 or 48 hours or have been in contact with anyone who has had symptoms within the same time. If any participant is unable to attend for this reason, or due to other changes in personal circumstances, they should inform the Programme Officer as soon as possible.

Each participant must attend on their own. If any participant considers it essential to be accompanied to the venue by someone else, for example because they need particular care or support, please let the Programme Officer know as soon as possible and no later than one week before the relevant session.

Participants should arrive at the Civic Centre at the time indicated in their joining instructions email in order to allow safety procedures to be followed and the inquiry to start promptly at 11.00am. Please queue outside the rear door of the Civic Centre located behind the main building within the parking area reserved for Councillors – this will be well sign posted on the day of the Meeting.

Everyone must maintain a one metre social distance at all times outside and inside the Civic Centre and in line with suggested guidelines within the Risk Assessment.

Unless exempt, everyone should wear a face covering before entering the Civic Centre and at all times other than when seated in their dedicated seat within the Council Chamber. It is suggested that Participants wear a face covering at their seat if possible.

On arrival at the Civic Centre, participants will be met by a member of the Council Staff outside the building. They will be asked to have a temperature test, and give details for test and trace contact if needed to be used following the meeting. Participants who have downloaded the NHS Covid-19 tracing app will be able to scan the QR code that will be displayed at the entrance to the Civic Centre, and Council Chamber. Once these procedures are completed, participants will be escorted to their dedicated seat in the Chamber.

Due to no parking available at the Civic Centre participants are recommended to use the Car Park on Sandgate Road (Leas Cliff Hall).

Within the Council Chamber

No more than 40 people will be allowed in the Chamber during the meeting. An indicative seating plan in the Chamber is attached to the Annex to this note. This identifies a total of 34 seats (marked in red) that can be used safely. The seats on the “top table” are for the Inspector and the Programme Officer.

¹ This advice may change if there is any change in Government Guidance

Other safety issues to be respected:

- Participants, attendees, officers and the public are all responsible for each other's and their own safety, please ensure safety instructions are followed;
- All available windows and doors will be opened prior to the meeting and these will remain open during the meeting. At this time of the year the weather should not be an issue, but please dress appropriately;
- Attendees will be allowed staggered entrance to the building after sanitising their hands at the entry point via the rear Civic Centre door;
- A seating plan has been developed that ensures the maximum distance between individuals is achieved – please look out for your name plate for allocated seating which will be different to the normal arrangement;
- Masks to be worn unless speaking;
- Entrance via rear Civic Centre Door only (please do not access through the civic building); and
- Please bring your own drinks.

Each designated seat will have its own microphone and arrangements will be made for cleaning of these in-between breaks/sessions. Sanitising wipes will be provided to allow users to clean their own desk/microphone prior to, and after each part of the meeting. If you are seated at a desk with no microphone and you request to speak you will be invited to use the podium mic. The podium mic will be wiped down after each use.

The Inspector will be taking a lunch break during the meeting and there will be comfort breaks during the morning and afternoon sessions, as necessary. If participants wish to leave their seat they may do so, but please wait until the Inspector has left the room, maintaining where possible one metre social distancing.

There are seating areas outside the Council Chamber, which can be used by participants during breaks. However, if any wishes to leave the building they will need to be escorted to the relevant exit and if they wish to re-enter the building they will need to sign in again.

There are toilet rooms available for participants on the corridor outside the Council Chamber. Social distancing should be respected during the use of these facilities with no more than two people inside each room at any one time. They are well marked for access.

No refreshments will be provided within the Civic Office, nor are there any catering facilities for participants to use. There are a number of shops, and cafes available within a few minutes-walk of the Civic Centre, although the duration of a lunch break cannot be guaranteed. Participants may wish to bring their own food and drink but everyone is requested to only consume water in the Chamber during hearing session.

No paper documents will be available or can be circulated before, during or after Pre-Inquiry Meeting. Wi-Fi access will be available for all participants in the Chamber.

At the end of the meeting, participants will be escorted from the building using the exit from the back of the Council Chamber.

If the fire alarm² sounds, everyone must leave the building promptly and safely and go to the assembly point in the rear of the staff car park which is at the furthest one from the Civic Centre¹. Whilst social distancing should be adhered to as far as possible in such circumstances, the first priority is to leave the building. When safely out of the building all should maintain appropriate distancing.

Live Streaming of the Pre-Inquiry Meeting

The Pre-Inquiry Meeting will be streamed live on the Council's You Tube Channel and the link to access this can be found on the Inquiry News and Updates [Page](#)

Further Information

If anyone has any queries about the hearing sessions, please contact the Programme Officer.

Finally, we are sure you will appreciate that during this difficult time arrangements may need to alter at very short notice so please keep up to date with the inquiry website page or in contact with the Programme Officer.

Mr O S Woodward
BA (Hons.) MA MRTPI

² The Fire Alarm is tested at 09:00 each Wednesday so if the meeting is being held and the alarm is held at any time other than this then it is likely that the building will need to be evacuated in response to the alarm