

To: Business & Operational Continuity Committee

Dear member,

Thank you to those who attended the call on Monday, please see below the meeting note from that session. Any questions please let me know.

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 12 October, 3-4pm**, and we welcome agenda item suggestions from members.

Thank you,

1. COVID-19 status and City of London speakers

- Members welcomed Xenia Koumi (XK) and Toby Thorpe (TT) from City of London (CoL) who briefed the committee on the current status of COVID-19 in the City, including vaccination, testing and safe working practices. The speakers noted the recent government announcement on the winter plan and agreed to share with the committee any changes to the City's approach in response to those updates.
- XK gave the latest readout of government figures for the latest daily average cases, cases for London, the total percentage of those vaccinated and the percentage in London. Noting that London had a lower than average vaccination rate and that employers could play a significant role in encouraging employees to access their vaccines and supporting them to do so. In addition, XR encouraged members to continue to promote staff to take part in twice-weekly testing particularly in light of the relaxation of restrictions.
- It was noted that London has a variety of testing and vaccination sites open and employees should be supported to attend those sites if they are in the City for work, if they are far away from vaccination centres at home.
- On the self-isolation exemption, members were reminded that since 16/08/21, individuals who are in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 no longer need to self-isolate. If someone has been in close contact with someone who has tested positive, they are encouraged to test daily and to work from home if possible in order to reduce potential for onward transmission.
- The City of London representatives encouraged employers to report local cases on the CoL [website](#), in addition to reporting through GOV.UK testing methods. Employers are also encouraged to contact trace any cases which are confirmed in their workplaces, in addition to NHS Test & Trace. **The legal requirement to self-isolate if someone tests positive remains in place.** The City of London has developed a number of useful guides for those working in London and members can access the latest versions [here](#).

2. City of London speakers: Health & Safety

- TT, Health & Safety Manager for the City of London, shared the importance of preventing the risk as a more effective strategy than mitigating the risk. He noted that vaccination remains a significant pillar of the national strategy for managing the COVID-19 pandemic in the absence of many restrictions.
- He noted that, in law, there have been no significant changes in the past 6 months as to COVID-19 requirements for employers from a Health & Safety perspective.

- On prevalence estimate, as per a recent Office for National Statistics (ONS) survey, 1 in 70 individuals had COVID during w/c 3/9/21. Overall, the current potential to come in contact with someone who has COVID-19 has increased significantly in the past several months.
- On the self-isolation exemption, individuals who are “double jabbed” are legally not required to self-isolate if they have come into contact with a confirmed case. Given that double jabbed individuals have sometimes contracted COVID-19, employers are encouraged to consider and support via messaging to staff that it may be beneficial to “self-isolate” from work, even if they are not required to “self-isolate” from all public activities as per the guidance.
- The City of London encourages maximising fresh air input and ventilation. Increasing numbers of staff in the office will change the current calculations of the amount of available fresh air in the office. The use of carbon dioxide monitors was noted as a method in which to monitor the amount of fresh air in the office, with increasing numbers of staff returning on-site.

3. Q&A

- One member noted that, although employers are encouraged to share positive COVID-19 cases and contact tracing information with local authorities, it is challenging to engage collaboratively with NHS Test & Trace. The question was raised as to whether there are currently any improvements to this process. It was shared that internal employer-led contact tracing is encouraged, as well as NHS Test & Trace, because there can be a delay with NHS Test & Trace to contact individuals. It is highly likely that employers can contact trace individuals more effectively than the NHS.
- One member raised the question around the 2-3 day period of infectious contact. CoL shared that this remains in place as a guideline for contact tracing any individuals who may have come into contact with the confirmed COVID case.

Thank you,