

Policy

Health and Safety

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 2, the town council regards the promotion of health, safety and welfare as an essential objective. It recognises and accepts the requirement for providing so far as is reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy workplace and a safe working environment for employees and further accepts its responsibility for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by the council's activities.
- 1.2 Health and safety is under the overall control and the responsibility of the town clerk.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The main objectives of this policy are to:
 - 2.1.1 provide a safe and healthy working environment including safe systems of work
 - 2.1.2 provide a health and safety organisation to effectively manage and monitor the safety arrangements
 - 2.1.3 increase the awareness of all employees to the responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others.
 - 2.1.4 ensure a systematic approach to risk assessment and control.
 - 2.1.5 ensure adequate resources, including the provision of competent personnel, are available to implement this policy.
 - 2.1.6 ensure the provision of such information, instruction and training as is necessary.
- 2.2 The town council recognises no safety policy can be successful without the active participation of employees. It will therefore make and maintain suitable arrangements for consultation on matters of health, safety and welfare.

2. Organisation and Responsibility – Overall Responsibility

- 2.1 The council:
 - 2.1.1 will ensure there is an effective policy for health and safety within the council

- 2.1.2 will periodically review the effectiveness of the policy every three years and will ensure any necessary changes are made
- 2.1.3 will consider health and safety issues brought to its attention.
- 2.2 The town clerk has overall responsibility for effective implementation of this health and safety policy throughout the council. In particular, the town clerk is responsible for ensuring:
 - 2.2.1 the town council's safety policy is effectively implemented
 - 2.2.2 adequate resources are available for the provision of appropriate health, safety and welfare arrangements
 - 2.2.3 external health and safety advice is sought where necessary
 - 2.2.4 notifiable injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences are reported to the enforcing authorities as required by Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
 - 2.2.5 arranging meetings every three months to review the council's health and safety provision.
- 2.3 The council will ensure suitable training is provided so that this role is effectively discharged.
- 2.4 The town clerk will have a general duty of care for the staff which will include:
 - 2.4.1 ensuring all staff receive appropriate training, information and instruction relevant to their duties
 - 2.4.2 in liaison with the Human Resources Committee, regularly reviewing training requirements and arranging training as necessary.
 - 2.4.3 ensuring risk assessments and safe working practices are reviewed regularly and updated as necessary
 - 2.4.4 ensuring safety inspections are undertaken regularly and that defects are promptly rectified
 - 2.4.5 encouraging consultation and staff input on matters relating to health, safety and welfare.
 - 2.4.6 ensuring all accidents are promptly reported and investigated.
 - 2.4.7 arranging the distribution of health and safety information

2.4.8 ensure COSHH assessments are completed and reviewed. Where additional advice is required this will be obtained from appropriate external agencies.

3. Organisation and Responsibility – Employees’ Responsibility

3.1 A health and safety programme cannot be successful without the co-operation and participation of employees. Consequently, arrangements are in place to provide for employees to be consulted on matters of health and safety.

3.2 Employees have a legal duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. They also have a legal duty to co-operate with their employer on matters of Health and Safety, and a duty not to interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.

3.3 Employees are expected to:

3.3.1 work in accordance with the training and instructions given

3.3.2 follow the safety arrangements and procedures established for their work activities

3.3.3 make use of all safety equipment, guards and personal protective equipment (PPE) provided

3.3.4 advise their line manager of any deficiencies in the health and safety arrangements that come to their attention, including faults or defects in machinery, PPE, guards and other control measures. Staff should cease using machinery that is unsafe and advise the line manager or get it repaired.

3.3.5 ensure their working area is kept tidy and that rubbish is placed in waste bins.

3.4 In this way, employees can play their part in making the workplace healthier and safer for themselves, their colleagues and the public.

3.5 Breaches of the safety rules or interfering with safety equipment will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

4. Fire Procedures

4.1 The town clerk is responsible for ensuring all employees are conversant with the following:

4.1.1 the action to be taken on discovering a fire

- 4.1.2 the actions to be taken upon hearing the fire alarm
- 4.1.3 raising the alarm
- 4.1.4 the correct method for calling the fire brigade, remembering to give precise details of the location of the fire
- 4.1.5 the location and use of fire-fighting equipment
- 4.1.6 knowledge of escape routes
- 4.1.7 appreciation of the importance of fire doors to help stop fires spreading and the need to close all doors at the time of a fire and on hearing the fire alarm
- 4.1.8 stopping machines and, where practicable, isolating power supplies
- 4.1.9 evacuation of the building. Where members of the public are present this will include reassuring them and escorting from the building
- 4.1.10 Details of muster (fire assembly) points.
- 4.2 Staff should be made aware that, however tempting it may be, they should not return to their office to collect personal effects and valuables, but should proceed directly to the muster points and should not re-enter the building until authorised to do so.
- 4.3 Practice fire drills will be carried out periodically on an unannounced basis to test the adequacy of the precautions and evacuation procedures.
- 4.4 Fire alarms will be tested on a weekly basis. It will be the responsibility of the operations manager to ensure all fire alarm tests and drills are recorded on the record sheets provided.
- 4.5 The operations manager will be responsible for ensuring the emergency lights and smoke detectors are checked on a regular basis, recording all checks in the logs provided.
- 4.6 The operations manager will organise annual inspection of all fire extinguishers on the council's premises in liaison with the current maintenance companies.
- 4.7 The operations manager is responsible for ensuring escape routes, stairways and passages are kept clear of obstructions at all times.
- 4.8 The operations manager will ensure stocks of flammable items will be kept to the minimum level that is compatible with efficient working

practice. Flammable liquids and organic solvents will be kept in metal cupboards.

5. Accident Reporting and Investigation

5.1 Accident Book

5.1.1 The accident book is kept in the town council office. It meets the requirements for accidents recording that are required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 1995 (RIDDOR).

5.1.2 Specific injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences must be reported by telephone to the enforcing authorities and followed up by form F2508 within 10 days.

5.1.3 Any injury resulting in more than three days' absence from normal work must also be reported within 10 days on form F2508. Details are included in HSC31 (Everyone's Guide to RIDDOR 1995 which also contains a copy of the form).

5.2 Personal Injury Accidents

Personal injury accident must be reported to the town clerk who will complete the accident form and investigate the accident to determine the cause and initiate any remedial action. When completed, the town clerk will make any reports to the enforcing authorities, as required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 1995.

5.3 Accidents resulting in damage to property and equipment and near miss

Whether personal injury results from an accident event is often a matter of luck. Many accidents result in damage or a near miss. All these events must be reported by an employee to their manager so they can be investigated and action taken to prevent a recurrence that could have more serious consequences.

5.5 First Aid

5.5.1 The town council will comply with The Health & Safety (First Aid Regulations 1981 and HSE Guidance Note IND (G) 215L 1997. First aid boxes are located in the council office, cemetery and council vans.

5.5.2 All boxes include a note listing their contents. Tablets or medicines are not kept in first aid boxes. The operations manager will ensure the contents of the first aid boxes are

regularly checked, that correct levels are maintained, and contents are not used after their expiry date.

5.6 Safety Training

The town clerk will arrange for induction training for all new members of staff. Where additional training is identified as necessary for the health, safety and welfare of staff, it will be given in-house or by outside agencies e.g. Schedule to the Abrasive Wheels Regulations 1970, Display Screen Equipment, Use of Specialised Personal Protective Equipment such as respiratory protection equipment.

5.7 Hazard Identification

5.7.1 The town council will comply with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992.

5.7.2 To develop and maintain the council's health and safety arrangements and ensure action is taken to eliminate or control the risks associated with its work activities, a programme of hazard identification and risk assessment is undertaken reviewed every three months.

5.7.3 The procedures to be adopted, copies of the required documentation and the results of the programme will be maintained in the risk assessment files held in the council's offices and on the council's computer files. Employees will be made aware of the significant findings of any review that affects them.

5.7.4 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, summary of legal employers' responsibilities:

5.7.4.1 to carry out and record the findings of risk assessments and any arrangements made as a result of the risk assessment (regulation 3)

5.7.4.2 to plan, organise, control, monitor and review all measures taken as a result of the risk assessment (regulation 4)

5.7.4.3 to provide health surveillance, for example keeping individual health records of employees (regulation 5)

5.7.4.4 to appoint one or more 'competent persons to help comply with the relevant statutory obligations (regulation 6)

- 5.7.4.5 to establish appropriate procedures which are to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to persons at work (regulations 7)
- 5.7.4.6 to provide information on the risks employees are exposed to and the measures taken by the employer in accordance with the risk assessment procedure (regulation 8)
- 5.7.4.7 to provide comprehensive information on health and safety to temporary workers and employees of an employment business (regulation 10)
- 5.7.4.8 to consider the capabilities of their employees as regards health and safety before entrusting any tasks to them (regulation 11)
- 5.7.5 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, summary of legal employees' responsibilities:
 - 5.7.5.1 employees are now under a duty to use any equipment provided to them by their employers in accordance with the instructions and training that has been given to them (regulation 12)

5.8 Risk Assessment

- 5.8.1 There are five stages to risk assessment:
 - 5.8.1.1 identify significant hazards
 - 5.8.1.2 decide who might be harmed; employers, sub-contractors, site visitors, customers, members of the public
 - 5.8.1.3 Evaluate the risks and decide on controls; can the hazard be eliminated, if not how can it be controlled or minimised
 - 5.8.1.4 Record the findings; pass on information to employees
 - 5.8.1.5 Review the assessments to ensure they remain valid.
- 5.8.2 A copy of the risk assessment form for recording general and specific assessments is attached, appendix A.
- 5.8.3 In undertaking risk assessments, officers follow guidance in paragraph 17 of the Health and Safety Commission's publication 'Management of Health and Safety at Work' which informs:

‘The level of detail in a risk assessment should be broadly proportional to the risk. The purpose is not to catalogue every trivial hazard; nor is the employer or self-employed person expected to be able to anticipate hazards beyond the limits of current knowledge. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment will reflect what is reasonably practicable to expect employers to know about the hazards in their workplaces. Some regulations require specific assessments (e.g. COSHH, Manual Handling, Noise, Display Screen Equipment), where these are identified during the general assessment, specific assessments do not have to be done twice and the requirements of the more specific should be applied.’

6. Monitoring Procedures

- 6.1 To monitor the effectiveness of the council’s health and safety systems, audits will be undertaken, using external services if required. Copies of the results of these audits will be made shared with employees.
- 6.2 Managers will carry out regular safety inspections of their areas of responsibility to ensure safety standards and housekeeping best practices are maintained. Additional health and safety arrangements will be developed as indicated by further risk assessments.
- 6.3 Health and safety will be reviewed every three months by a health and safety panel which consists of two members, the town clerk, the operations manager, a staff member from the external works’ team and a staff member from the office team.
- 6.4 The minutes from the panel meeting will be submitted to the council’s Human Resources Committee, along with a report from the town clerk.
- 6.5 Consultation Arrangements

The local Inspector’s office and telephone number is:

HM Inspector of Health & Safety,
Inter City House,
Mitchell Lane,
Bristol
Tel: 0117 929 0681

7. Work Equipment Safety Procedures

- 7.1 The town council will comply with The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992.
- 7.2 Where possible, equipment will be purchases which confirms to British Standard or Central European Normalisation safety standards. The

town clerk should be consulted if these requirements cannot be complied with.

8. Control of Substances Hazardous To Health Regulations (COSHH)

- 8.1 The town council will comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988.
- 8.2 Manufacturer's safety data sheets will be obtained from suppliers and held on file. These do not constitute COSHH assessments but are required to provide the information to enable assessments to be completed.
- 8.3 Assessments will be carried out and will consider the hazardous substances used or created, the working processes involved, and how tasks are performed. More than one assessment may be required for one substance if it is used in different ways which create different risks.
- 8.4 The first task is to determine the hazardous substances used or created, e.g. paints, isocyanates, solvents, dusts and fumes, and the risks they pose. This is followed by an examination of any risks their application or use could create and whether any of these risks could be eliminated by substitution of a non or less hazardous product. If this is not possible, an assessment should be undertaken to establish how any risk can be controlled. Where control is not possible or there is some residual risk then, as a last resort, personal protection equipment may be required.

9. Electrical Safety

- 9.1 The town council will comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
- 9.2 The town council will have its electrical wiring checked periodically or when new work is undertaken. Installation records will be held in the council's office.
- 9.3 Residual current devices and 110 volt transformers/generators will be used where necessary.
- 9.4 All portable electrical appliances will be registered and inspected and tested annually by a competent electrical contractor. Users should be familiar with the items to inspect and problems to look for HSE IND (G) 89(L), GS37 refers.

10. Display Screen Equipment

- 10.1 The town council will comply with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992.

- 10.2 The town council will assess all workstations staffed by employees who use visual display unit (VDU) screens as part of their usual work and will ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, all work stations meet the requirements set out in the schedule to the regulations.
- 10.3 The risks to users of VDU screens will be reduced to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.
- 10.4 VDU screen users are encouraged to take periodic breaks in their work.
- 10.5 Eyesight tests will be provided for VDU screen users on request. Where 'special' corrective appliances (normally spectacles) are required to meet the requirements of the regulations (usually less than 10% of the working population) the council will provide the basic necessary correction equipment; as more specifically detailed in paragraphs 58 - 62 of the regulations.

11. Lifting and Manual Handling of Loads

- 11.1 The town council will comply with The Manual Handling (Operations) Regulations 1992.
- 11.2 Manual handling operations will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable where there is a risk of injury.
- 11.3 Where it is not possible to avoid manual handling operations an assessment of the operation will be made taking into account the task, the load, the working environment and the capability of the individual concerned. An assessment will be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect that it is no longer valid.
- 11.4 All possible steps will be taken to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest level possible.
- 11.5 Wherever reasonably practicable, lifting and moving objects will be done by mechanical devices rather than manual handling. The equipment used will be appropriate for the task.
- 11.6 The load to be lifted or moved must be inspected for sharp edges, slivers and wet or greasy patches.
- 11.7 When lifting or moving a load with sharp or splintered edges gloves must be worn. Gloves should be free from oil, grease or other agents, which might impair grip.
- 11.8 The route over which the load is to be lifted or moved should be inspected to ensure it is free of obstructions or spillage which could cause tripping or spillage.

- 11.9 Employees should not attempt to lift or move a load, which is too heavy to manage comfortably
- 11.10 Where team lifting or moving is necessary, one person should act as co-ordinator, giving commands to lift, lower etc
- 11.11 When lifting an object off the ground employees should assume a squatting position, keeping their head back and their back straight. The load should be lifted by straightening the knees, not the back. These steps should be reserved for lowering an object to the ground.

12. Housekeeping

- 12.1 The town council will comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992.
- 12.2 Good housekeeping is a pro-active way of preventing many hazardous conditions that may result in injury to people. The use of a checklist is encouraged with the proviso that it can blinker the inspectors and not allow them to think in broader terms than the list in front of them. Hazardous items discovered should be put right immediately where possible, e.g. trailing leads, gangway obstructions.
- 12.3 The operations manager will conduct regular inspections of the workplace. In addition, inspections will be conducted in the relevant areas whenever there are significant changes in the nature and/or scale of the council's operations.
- 12.4 Workplace inspections will also provide an opportunity to review the continuing effectiveness of the safety policy and identify areas where revision of the policy may be necessary.

13. Personal Protective Equipment

- 13.1 The town council will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.
- 13.2 Employees must use all personal protective equipment provided to them in accordance with the training and instruction given to them regarding its use.
- 13.3 Employees who have been provided with personal protective equipment must immediately report any loss of or obvious defect in any equipment provided to their line manager.

14. Violence to Staff

- 14.1 The Health and Safety Executive defines work-related violence as 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work'.

14.2 The council should ensure the possibility of violence to its staff is considered when undertaking risk assessments. Every effort should be made to reduce the possibility of violence to the minimum level that is reasonably practicable by using safe working practices

14.3 All incidents in which member(s) of the council's staff are abused, threatened or assaulted must be reported to the town clerk.

15. Review

15.1 This policy will be reviewed in May 2019 or sooner if there are changes in legislation or best practice.

Implementation Date: 4 May 2016

Review Date: May 2019

John Wright
Town Clerk
May 2016