

# REPORT TO CABINET

**REPORT OF:** Healthy Environment Portfolio Holder

**REPORT NO:** ENV433

**DATE:** 6 July 2009

<b>TITLE:</b>	Corporate Health and Safety Policy	
<b>KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:</b>	N/A	
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER: NAME AND DESIGNATION:</b>	Cllr John Smith	
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	D F Price	
<b>INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT:</b>	Carried out and Referred to in paragraph (7) below:	Full impact assessment Required: No
Equality and Diversity		
<b>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:</b>	This report is publicly available via the Local Democracy link on the Council's website: <a href="http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk">www.southkesteven.gov.uk</a>	
<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	none	

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet consider the draft corporate health and safety policy and resolve to adopt it.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The new and improved policy has been revised to incorporate changes to the staffing structure; it reflects the improved management arrangements and various initiatives to enhance the council's health and safety performance. The policy will require approval by the Cabinet. The achievement of good health and safety within the Council will contribute to the Quality Organisation priority theme, providing a safe and healthy working environment for both staff and all others affected by service activities.

### **3. DETAILS OF REPORT**

The Council's corporate health and safety policy is due for review as part of a regular process. This policy is required by law and sets out the Council's commitment to ensuring its compliance with health and safety requirements. The policy is organised in three sections, ie a statement confirming its commitment, the organisational structure and the arrangements for putting the policy in place. The revised policy confirms the intention of the Council to:

- act as an exemplar
- set out the responsibilities of various levels of officers
- include the self audit of services by managers
- develop a council safety group
- make arrangements for training and development
- incorporate new legislation
- review the policy at regular intervals

The policy has been consulted on by the Communities PDG, staff, managers and the Joint Consultative Negotiating Group. Where revisions have been made subsequent to the draft considered by the Communities PDG these are set out in red italics in the policy attached.

### **4. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The requirement to have an up to date safety policy in place is statutory. There are no viable alternative options.

### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

The policy will have an impact on the council's activity in line with existing resource demands for this activity.

### **6. RISK AND MITIGATION**

Adoption of an updated corporate health and safety policy will, provide a clear lead for its staff and others, assist in protecting staff, customers and others affected by the council's activities from risks to their health and safety and mitigate the risk of the Council being exposed to enforcement action.

### **7. ISSUES ARISING FROM EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An equalities impact assessment has been carried out and no adverse impact was identified.

**8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

Not applicable.

**9. COMMENTS OF SECTION 151 OFFICER**

From a risk management perspective it is important to have an up to date Health and Safety policy that reflects the operational aspects of the Organisation. The awareness and training for staff in respect of this policy will need to be an integral part of the Corporate training programme. Any cost implications arising from this policy will be met from existing resources

**10. COMMENTS OF MONITORING OFFICER**

The health and safety policy is an important policy relating to health and safety at work. It relates to all employees, Councillors and others who use and come on to council premises, equipment, plant and machinery and other facilities. Whilst it is a legal requirement to have a policy, it exists as an essential document to inform everybody of this Council's position in relation to health and safety issues. Without a robust policy which is well communicated and adhered to, the Council faces, not only the risk of enforcement for non-compliance but also claims from those adversely affected by the lack of policy.

The draft policy must be considered thorough a process of consultation as detailed in the Constitution at page 175 clause 2.4. I understand a form of consultation has taken place and the results of that consultation have been taken into account in the draft policy

**11. COMMENTS OF OTHER RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER**

None

**12. APPENDICES: see attached draft policy**

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# **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK etc. ACT 1974**

## **GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT**

The Council recognises and accepts its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees and others who may be affected by the Council's work activities.

The Council will meet its responsibility under the Act and associated legislation and provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, the resources necessary to meet this commitment. The Council will pay particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:

- Safe plant and equipment in conjunction with safe systems of work.
- Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of monies, articles and substances.
- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
- A safe place of work including access and egress.
- A healthy working environment.
- Adequate welfare facilities.
- Risk assessments to identify work hazards present and ensure satisfactory implementation of control measures.
- Adequate procedures to ensure all contractors, and others where we have a duty of care are fully compliant with this policy and health and safety legislation.
- Competent technical advice on health and safety matters.

The Council will co-operate fully in the appointment of safety representatives by recognised trade unions and will comply with the requirements of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations, Approved Code of Practice & Guidance. Staff with a specific responsibility for health and safety will be provided with sufficient facilities and training to carry out their tasks. The Council will seek to consult with employees and safety representatives directly and via safety committees. This safety policy will be reviewed every 2 years, and added to or modified as necessary within that period.

Signed.....

*Beverly Agass*  
*Interim Chief Executive*

Signed .....

Councillor Linda Neal  
Leader of the Council

Dated: *June* 2009

# **ORGANISATION**

## **Structure:**

### **General Health & Safety**



### **Lead for Health & Safety**



## **General Duties & Responsibilities**

It is the duty of elected members, the Chief Executive, the Management Team and Service Managers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that health and safety policy and legislation is adhered to by employees of the Council and by those carrying out work for the Council.

The specific responsibilities of the Council, its members and employees under this policy are as follows:

### **The Council**

The Council will via the Cabinet ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that sufficient resources are provided to comply with the duties imposed by health and safety legislation and encourage the achievement of exemplar status in health and safety matters.

### ***Chief Executive***

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for health and safety in the Council and is accountable to the elected members for the overall operation of this policy. Responsibilities include:

1. To advise the Council on arrangements, policies and resources necessary to fulfil the Council's responsibilities under this policy.
2. Make suitable arrangements to ensure the implementation and administration of the Council's instructions.
3. To ensure that health and safety matters are an integral part of Management Team meetings.
4. To ensure that the Management Team understand and implement their duties and responsibilities under this policy.

### ***Management Team (MT)***

The MT collectively and individually are accountable to the Council and the Chief Executive for the health and safety in areas for which they have line management responsibility.

Responsibilities include:

1. *The implementation of this policy and compliance with the statutory requirements in their area(s) of responsibility.*
2. Ensure that this policy is implemented and administered within their areas of responsibility.
3. To make appropriate arrangements for advising the Council through the Chief Executive of the resources necessary to meet the health, safety and welfare requirements of their areas of responsibility.
4. To ensure that Service Managers understand and implement their duties and responsibilities under this policy, *and provide any necessary support and leadership.*
5. To utilise, consult and co-operate with the Council's Safety Adviser.
6. To support and provide leadership to the Council's Safety Group.
7. To comply with the matters listed under Service Managers responsibility where employees report directly to the Management Team.
8. To attend Health & Safety training as advised

### ***Service Managers (SM)***

SM are accountable to the Council, the Chief Executive and the relevant members of the MT for health and safety within their services.

Responsibilities include:

1. The implementation of this policy and compliance with the statutory requirements in their area of responsibility.
2. The implementation of the control measures detailed within the Council's generic risk assessments.
3. The preparation and revision, as directed within the Health & Safety risk assessment procedure, of service specific risk assessments and any necessary safety arrangements.
4. To ensure that persons under SM control are adequately instructed, trained and supervised in Health & Safety matters.
5. To take such measures as are appropriate to ensure that contractors employed or others acting on behalf of the Council within their service are aware of their responsibilities under this policy and relevant legislation.
6. To ensure that safety equipment is provided and used and any safety instructions are observed.
7. To ensure that the workplace, machinery, plant and equipment are maintained in a safe condition and that all defects are rectified promptly.
8. To ensure the satisfactory completion of the Council's accident book including

an investigation of the incident and, where necessary, notification under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

9. To ensure that the Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and procedure is complied with and employees are protected from such persons so far as is reasonably practicable.
10. To take effective steps to ensure that persons under their *responsibility* are familiar with procedures to be followed in case of fire or other emergency.
11. *To ensure* a suitable number of trained fire check staff are provided to satisfy the Fire Safety Policy and arrangements.
12. To ensure that all new employees complete health and safety induction and attend *the Council's "Health and Safety For Employees" training or equivalent*.
13. To ensure all statutory and advisory *health and safety related* notices are displayed within the service
14. To ensure health and safety related documentation is available and current.
15. To ensure protective clothing or safety equipment is provided and the necessary arrangements are in place to store, issue and maintain it.
16. To maintain good standards of housekeeping, paying particular attention to storage arrangements and access to means of emergency escape.
17. To liaise and co-operate with the Council's Safety Adviser in matters affecting the health and safety of persons in relation to work.
18. To ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to protect members of the public and others who may be affected by the activities of the Council.
19. *To carry out and complete the Health and Safety – Service Manager Self Audit and Self Assessment as and when directed by the Council's Safety Adviser. This will form part of the process of measuring the performance of the Council on health and safety.*
20. To attend Health & Safety training as advised

### **Employees**

All employees, whatever designation are responsible for taking reasonable care for their health and safety and should do nothing which is likely to endanger themselves or other persons, whether employed by the Council or not.

All employees will:

1. Make themselves familiar with and comply with this policy, relevant guidance and observe safety rules and procedures.
2. Comply with all instructions and training given by persons responsible for health and safety.
3. Wear and maintain in good order appropriate safety protective equipment and clothing supplied by the Council.
4. Record all accidents/incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses within the service accident book and ensure the Service Manager is informed.
5. Report all dangerous property, practices, equipment and plant to their Service Manager. If no satisfactory action is taken seek further advice from the Council's Safety Adviser and/or refer the matter in accordance with the Council's Grievance and Whistle Blower procedures.
6. Report all incidents of unacceptable behaviour in accordance with the Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and procedure.
7. Remain aware of the correct action to be taken in case of accident, fire or other similar emergency.



8. Provide assistance to visitors in the event of an emergency.
9. Attend all health and safety training sessions arranged on their behalf.

**\*Failure to comply with instructions or interference with / misuse of anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal.\***

## **LEAD FOR HEALTH & SAFETY**

### ***Cabinet Portfolio Holder***

The Cabinet Member holds within their portfolio a responsibility for corporate health and safety arrangements on behalf of the Council.

Responsibilities include:

1. The receipt of reports concerning the performance of the Council in relation to health and safety matters
2. The approval on behalf of the Council of any other health and safety related policies.

### ***Healthy Communities***

The council's designated competent person for health and safety matters is the Healthy Communities Service Manager. The health and safety advisory function is within the Healthy Communities Service, and is provided through the Council's Safety Adviser and deputies.

Responsibilities include:

1. To assist in ensuring the Cabinet, MT, SM and relevant team leaders are adequately trained in the management of health and safety.
2. To promote the development and maintenance of health, safety and welfare practices and be available for advice as necessary.
3. To assist the Council and the Chief Executive in ensuring that the Council fulfils its responsibilities through this policy to employees and others who may be affected by the business of the council.
4. To produce the Council's Safety Policy, and modify as necessary with a formal review every 2 years.
5. To produce, and review the Council's generic health and safety risk assessments.
6. To advise on the application of and changes to statutory requirements affecting the Council.
7. To advise and assist in health and safety training requirements.
8. To prepare regular reports to the MT detailing the performance of the Council in health and safety matters.
9. To receive, maintain and analyse accident reports.
10. To carry out health and safety audits of services and work activities on a frequency determined by hazard and risk assessment.
11. To assist in the production of, and where necessary, produce guidance, policies and procedures for health and safety matters.
12. To guide, instruct and, where necessary, participate in the training of, display screen equipment (DSE) assessors and fire check staff.
13. To participate in, lead and where necessary, co-ordinate formal or informal safety meetings.
14. To coordinate the Council's Safety Group, *led by the Corporate Head of Healthy Environment.*
15. To maintain a dialogue with all services, other local authorities and outside

bodies (eg Fire Authority, Health and Safety Executive etc ) on health and safety matters.

**\*In fulfilling these responsibilities, the Council's Safety Adviser will have access to any Council work place. In extreme circumstances, where it is felt there is imminent danger, shall have the right to insist that particular work *or use of that equipment* should cease or be changed until steps can be taken to rectify the defects. *In addition such equipment may be removed if deemed so unsafe*\***

### **Safety Representatives**

The Council recognises the appointment of safety representatives by recognised trade unions. The Council will provide safety representatives with the necessary time off with pay to attend training courses approved by the TUC or their union and to carry out their functions. The Council will also provide such reasonable facilities as may be required to assist in the performance of these functions. Functions include:

1. The investigation of potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace (whether or not they are drawn to their attention by the employees they represent).
2. The examination of the causes of accidents at the workplace.
3. The investigation of complaints by any employee represented, related to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work.
4. To make representations to the Council on matters arising out of the above functions.
5. To make representations to the Council on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the employees at the workplace.
6. To carry out workplace inspections.
7. To represent the member employees in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health & Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority.
8. To receive information from inspectors in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work etc Act.
9. To attend meetings of safety committees in connection with any of the above functions.

## **ARRANGEMENTS**

### **General**

The following arrangements supplement the policy but are not intended to be exhaustive. Constant observance of the policy, adherence to rules and maintenance of good practices and procedures will prevent personal suffering and injury and in some cases, property and equipment damage.

### **Consultation**

Employees will be consulted on health and safety matters either directly through line management at team /service meetings or 121s, through all staff briefings or by safety representatives.

Employees can make suggestions to improve health and safety *at any level of the organisation and by whatever means and in addition through* the staff suggestion scheme or directly to the Council's Safety Adviser by telephone, visit, e. mail or the

intranet.

Employees can raise concerns directly to the Council's Safety Adviser or by making use of the Council's *Whistle Blower* scheme, *details of which can be found on the Council's intranet*.

The Council will establish a Safety Group led by *the Corporate Head of Healthy Environment*. Terms of reference will be developed. This group will assist in developing the Council's policy and procedure.

### ***Training, Instruction & Supervision***

The Council recognises its responsibility for training, instruction and supervision in health and safety for all employees. All employees must co-operate in undergoing training and instruction. Training, instruction and supervision should be provided particularly where employees are new, transferred from other workplaces or jobs, or before using new equipment or materials. This may include within areas such as manual handling, use of work equipment, use of chemicals and personal protective equipment where appropriate.

The health and safety training session "A Guide to Health & Safety For Employees" is available to all employees but is mandatory for new employees as part of the induction process. New employees will also complete an induction checklist with their line management upon employment. A copy of which will be retained on the employees personal records. Refresher training is available for existing staff. Additional and specific job related health and safety training will be arranged as necessary through the Service Manager or member of Management Team.

All Service Managers and *,where a need is identified, selected* team leaders will train to at least IOSH Managing Safely level and will achieve the relevant accreditation.

The Chief Executive, Management Team and relevant Cabinet members will attend health and safety training as advised by the Corporate Safety Adviser.

### ***Risk Assessment***

The Council are required under the Management of Health & Safety At Work Regulations to carry out health and safety risk assessments. In order to continue to fulfill the Council's commitment to providing a safe and healthy work environment and comply with the regulations the Council have provided a risk assessment manual. The manual is set out in 3 sections as follows:

1. Section 1 Generic Risk Assessments which generally apply to a group of workers as a whole over several locations. It is the responsibility of the Council's Safety Adviser to review, alter, amend and add to these generic risk assessments as necessary.
2. Section 2 Management Risk Assessment Procedure which is a practical step by step guide to carrying out risk assessments including blank forms for use by Service Managers or member of Management Team.
3. Section 3 Service/Site Specific Risk Assessments completed by the Service Manager or member of Management Team.

All employees will be made aware of the significant findings of the risk assessments and their responsibilities for ensuring that the control measures are suitably implemented. Awareness will be through induction, training, appraisals, meetings or any other such measures as deemed appropriate by the Service Manager or member of Management Team member.

A copy of sections 1 & 2 of the risk assessment manual is maintained on the health & safety page of the Council's intranet. Hard copies of the manual including section 3 the service / site specific risk assessments are held within each service.

Risk assessments will be reviewed in accordance with step 9 of the management risk assessment procedure detailed within the manual.

### ***First aid***

Qualified first aiders and/or appointed persons are provided to cover the offices and areas of work activity of the Council. Names of first aiders and the location of suitably stocked first aid boxes are displayed on notices in prominent areas within each service area. Portable first aid kits will be provided within Council vehicles as determined by the Service Manager or member of Management Team.

In the case of an injury requiring first aid and the absence of qualified first aiders, *first aid should not be administered although the contents of the first aid box may be offered to the injured person, pending appropriate treatment. Do not offer first aid treatment unless trained to do so and only offer treatment to the appropriate level of training.*

### ***Accident & Incident Reports***

All accidents, incidents and near misses which have any implications with respect to health, safety and welfare must be recorded and reported in accordance with the Council's accident/incident procedure contained within the Council's accident book. *Every Service has access to an accident book within their service area.* All employees should make themselves familiar with the accident book and its location within their area of work.

A guidance procedure for investigating and reporting accidents/incidents is available for Service Managers and members of Management Team on the intranet. *Where necessary an accident investigation team may need to be set up this will be co-ordinated by the Service Manager or member of Management Team in conjunction with the Council's Safety Adviser.*

It is a legal requirement under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations to report certain specified accidents and work-related ill health. Guidance is available within the Council's accident book and also through the Council's Safety Adviser.

### ***Fire & Evacuation Procedure***

All employees are responsible for ensuring that they are fully aware of the fire and emergency procedures for their place of work. Trained Fire Check Staff are available within all services/sites and tasked with duties which include carrying out fire safety audits and dissemination of information to employees. Detailed information is set out

in the Council's Fire Safety Policy and Procedure.

Bomb Threats and Suspicious Package/Letter Guidance is available and issued to all staff at induction. Employees should ensure that they are aware of this guidance and the action to be taken in the event of an emergency. *In addition the guidance is available on the Council's intranet.*

### ***Housekeeping***

Everyone has a vital part to play in ensuring good standards of housekeeping. It is essential to conform to the arrangements for:

1. Proper storage of clothing, tools, materials and equipment.
2. Articles not in immediate use to be placed in proper storage, to keep floor/ground area clear.
3. Storage and disposal of waste.
4. Correct positioning of furniture, equipment and storage facilities.
5. Maintaining corridors, access, egress and emergency escape routes free from obstruction at all times.
6. *Fire doors marked as such should be kept closed at all times as directed by the sign.*

### ***Slips and Trips***

Slip and trip accidents are the most common cause of major accidents at work and can happen for a number of reasons. In order to prevent slips and trips the Council and where appropriate employees will ensure that:

1. Flooring is suitable for the type of work activity and is also cleaned and fitted correctly and maintained in good order
2. Stairs have high visibility, non slip square nosed edgings to step, suitable hand rails and steps of equal height and width.
3. Contamination caused by anything that ends up on the floor for example, water, oil, dust is cleaned effectively and quickly
4. There are effective levels of housekeeping in order to avoid obstacles, to include, suitable walkways through the workplace, no trailing cables nor obstructions, and suitable storage space.
5. There is an effective cleaning regime which incorporates good communication, training and supervision, with the correct cleaning products and equipment.
6. There is a positive 'See it, sort it!' attitude and consideration is given to how movement is carried out throughout the work areas
7. Consideration is given to environmental issues such as lighting (natural or otherwise), the weather, humidity, condensation etc.
8. Suitable footwear for the work activity is worn and where appropriate provided by the Council as determined by a risk assessment.

### ***Smoking Policy***

The council is committed to fully complying with the Smoke free legislation. The Council operates a Smoking Policy which establishes a set of standards for ensuring a smoke free working environment. In addition Service Managers Guidance is provided in order to ensure employees and visitors to the Council adhere to the legislation and

Council policy.

### ***Work Equipment***

Any work equipment which is used by an employee at work is covered by the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER). Service Managers or member of Management Team will ensure that equipment provided for use at work is:

1. Suitable for the intended use
2. Suitably controlled through a risk assessment which clearly identifies control measures to be implemented
3. Safe for use, maintained in safe condition and where appropriate inspected to ensure this remains the case. Records will be kept to this effect.
4. Used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training, which is recorded for the individual.
5. Accompanied by suitable safety measures eg. Protective devices, markings, warnings.

### ***Display Screen Equipment (DSE)***

In order to comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations Service Managers or member of Management Team will ensure:

1. There is an appointed and trained DSE assessor for their areas of responsibility. All assessors are trained by the Corporate Safety Adviser to carry out their role and are provided with written duties in order to ensure their areas of responsibilities comply with the provisions of the legislation.
2. DSE assessors assess all DSE workstations and complete the Council's assessment sheet with the DSE user. Findings of such assessments are addressed through the relevant Service Manager or member of Management Team.
3. Training specifically on the safe use of DSE is available to all staff. This training is mandatory to users identified during assessments and as part of the induction of new employees and is carried out by the Corporate Safety Adviser.
4. Eye and eyesight tests are made available to DSE users. Employees will be advised of this arrangement through the DSE assessment process. Eye examinations fees and any contribution towards the provision of spectacles or their adaptations where this is necessary for work purposes is coordinated through Human Resources and Operational Development.

### ***Driving and Workplace Transport***

- **Drivers.** All employees where driving is part of their work should be competent, trained and fit and healthy so as not to put themselves or others at risk. A copy of a full driving licence (card and paper), will be checked as part of the employee's induction and annually thereafter by the relevant Service Manager or member of Management Team. Employees should satisfy the eyesight requirements set out in the Highway Code.

No employee should drive or operate vehicles if they have taken alcohol or illicit drugs or have reason to believe that they may be under the effect of alcohol or illicit drugs. Employees should inform their line manager where they are taking any medication, whether prescribed or bought over-the-counter, which may effect their ability to drive safely.

*It is illegal to use a mobile phone whilst driving and as such drivers could face legal action through the Police Authority and additional disciplinary action by the Council. Hands free facilities may be available within vehicles or to drivers, however the use of hands free sets should be monitored as there is still the risk that drivers may be distracted by calls taken whilst driving. In the absence of a hands free facility, mobile phones should be set to answer phone and calls should only be taken when this is both safe and legal to do so.*

Young drivers and those with limited experience will be offered support and coaching and their progress will be monitored through the relevant Service Manager or member of Management Team.

Safe driver training is available through Human Resources & Organisational Development. Any additional training/testing necessary for the vehicle is the responsibility of the relevant Service Manager or member of Management Team.

- **Vehicles.** Where vehicles are provided by the Council these will be fit for purpose and maintained in road worthy order. Planned and preventative maintenance of Council vehicles will be carried out in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations. Any additional basic safety checks will be carried out by drivers as directed by the Council.

The Council will maintain appropriate levels of vehicle insurance. Where employees use their own vehicle for work they should maintain the vehicle in satisfactory road worthy condition and ensure that they have an appropriate level of vehicle insurance to include business use at all times. *In addition a copy of the insurance policy detailing that business use is included should be provided annually to the relevant Service Manager or member of Management Team. This should be provided as part of the aforementioned driving licence checks.*

- **Workplace.** The Council will ensure that traffic routes and surfaces under it's control are suitable for purpose and not uneven, potholed, sloped or slippery. Suitable and sufficient lighting will be maintained and where necessary signs, signals and markings will be provided. Those employees responsible for the receipt of deliveries should ensure that arrangements are in place so these are carried out in a safe manner with minimal risk to pedestrians, in particular where the reversing of vehicles cannot be avoided.

### **Contractors & Sub-Contractors**

Service Managers or member of Management Team will ensure that contractors and sub-contractors employed by or on behalf of the Council or any other individuals or organisations acting on behalf of the council have the ability and resources for effectively managing health and safety, thus protecting all who may be affected.

The responsible client officer must ensure that every contract awarded contains a provision that safe methods of work will be employed and full compliance with the health and safety legislation is expected. Obtaining a copy of the organisation's signed safety policy and example risk assessments will assist in demonstrating this.

The responsible client officer should ensure safety matters are monitored in order to



ensure compliance with safe working methods and health and safety legislation. Where the contractor fails to meet the health and safety standards suitable penalties may be instigated.

### ***Hazardous Substances***

Service Managers or member of Management Team will identify all substances which require an assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). An assessment using the COSHH assessment form contained within Section 2 of the Risk Assessment Manual will be completed. All control measures detailed within the assessment will be implemented and brought to the attention of those employees who may be affected. The completed COSHH assessment form will be retained within Section 3 of the Service/Site Risk Assessment Manual.

### ***Asbestos***

Asbestos was extensively used as a building material in the UK from the 1950s through to the mid 1980s. It was used for a variety of purposes and was ideal for fireproofing and insulation. Asbestos materials in good condition are safe unless fibres become airborne. The three main diseases caused by asbestos are mesothelioma, lung cancer and asbestosis. These diseases do not cause an illness immediately but become evident in years to come.

The Control of Asbestos Regulations cover the prohibition of asbestos, the control of asbestos at work and asbestos licensing. In order to comply with this legislation the Council operates an Asbestos Policy and associated risk assessment procedure. In addition Asset & Facilities and Repairs & Improvements carry out surveys of council owned domestic and non-domestic premises in order to demonstrate the “duty to manage” section of the legislation.

### ***Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)***

PPE will be issued to employees where a risk or COSHH assessment details this requirement. The Service Manager or member of Management Team in conjunction with the employee will ensure that PPE is:

- Appropriate for the risk(s) involved
- Capable of fitting the wearer correctly
- Not affecting the state of health of the wearer.

All employees should wear safety equipment for their work where provided and notify their line manager if this becomes damaged, defective or lost. The Service Manager or member of Management Team should retain records in relation to the provision of PPE to include the date of issue, nature of equipment, training given in use and any date for replacement.

### ***Manual Handling***

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations apply to a wide range of manual handling activities, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying. The load may be either inanimate - such as

a box or a trolley, or animate - a person or an animal. Work related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) include problems such as low back pain, joint injuries and repetitive strain injuries of various sorts and are often associated with manual handling operations.



The Manual Handling Operations Regulations set no specific requirements such as weight limits although they do establish the following:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable, for example by redesigning the task to avoid moving the load or by automating or mechanizing the process.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable, for example the provision of mechanical assistance such as a sack trolley or hoist.

All manual handling tasks with a significant risk of injury will be suitably risk assessed and control measures implemented, where required and reasonably practicable and in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations and the Council's generic risk assessment.

Where the need for an assessment is identified this will be carried out by the Service Manager or member of Management Team and where necessary advice will be sought through the Corporate Safety Adviser. The assessment will cover the task, individual capability, the load, the working environment, and other factors such as PPE. Consideration will be given during any such assessment to the Health & Safety Executive's (HSE) manual handling assessment chart (MAC). The MAC tool will assist in identifying high-risk manual handling operations and the completion of the risk assessment.

The assessment will identify where specific information and training on manual handling operations, injury risks and prevention is needed for employees. Completed assessments will be recorded within section 3 of the Service/Site Risk Assessment manual.

### ***Unacceptable Behaviour***

The Council will take all practical measures available to reduce the incidence of unacceptable behaviour directed towards employees and those acting on it's behalf during or as a result of the work activity. People may act out of character in times of trouble or distress particularly following upsetting or distressing circumstances. The Council does not view behaviour as unacceptable just because a person is forceful or determined. However, the actions of a person who is angry, demanding and/or persistent may result in unreasonable demands on the Council or unacceptable behaviour towards employees.

Unacceptable behaviours include:

- Aggressive or abusive behaviour which is not restricted to acts of aggression that may result in physical harm
- Unreasonable demands which will depend on the circumstances surrounding the behaviour and the seriousness of the issues raised
- Unreasonable persistence where for example these are taking up an unreasonable amount of time and resources.

The Council operates an Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and procedure. The procedure clearly states the way in which a report made by an employee will be

addressed by all those with responsibility. Staff guidance notes and training is available. Training available includes customer care and quality, dealing with difficult customers and coping with aggression and violence within the workplace and is available to employees and elected members upon request or when the need is identified through a risk assessment.

Service Managers or member of Management Team is responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of the policy and procedure and provide appropriate support and investigation following a report of unacceptable behaviour.

The Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and procedure is available on the health & safety page of the intranet. The Council operates an “exercise with caution list” which contains details of persons who have carried out acts of unacceptable behaviour towards Council employees and others acting on it’s behalf. The list also details persons provided through agreed third parties such as the police, probation service, social services, health authority. Service Managers and members of Management Team are provided with a copy of the “exercise with caution” list for them to raise to relevant front line employees others acting on behalf of the Council.

### ***Lone Working***

Lone workers face particular risks when carrying out work activities outside the security of council premises. Service Managers or member of Management Team will, at minimum, ensure the implementation of the control measures detailed within the generic risk assessments of the Council’s risk assessment manual. Further training, instruction and guidance notes may need to be developed by the Service Manager or member of Management Team, particularly where employees are involved in cash handling or contentious matters. *Arrangements should also be put in place by Service Managers and members of Management Team in order to ensure the protection of employees working within Council owned premises out of normal hours of opening.*

### ***Work-Related Stress***

Well designed, organised and managed work helps to maintain and promote individual health and well-being. Where there has been insufficient attention to job design, work organisation and management the benefits associated with “good work” could be lost. One common result is work-related stress. Work-related stress means the process which arises where work demands of various types and combinations exceed an employee’s capacity and capability to cope.

The Health & Safety Executive’s (HSE) definition of work-related stress is :  
“The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them at work.”

Stress is not an illness it is a state and a natural reaction to too much pressure. If stress becomes too excessive and prolonged, mental and physical illness may develop. Signs of stress in individuals include emotional symptoms, mental symptoms and changes in behaviour. Everyone has a part to play, at every level of the Council in recognising changes in behaviour, being aware that something is wrong with an individual or group and taking prompt action in dealing with work-related stress. *When considering stress the issue of bullying should also form part of any assessment.*

Why should action be taken?

- Benefits to individuals, teams and the organisation
- Legal requirements
- Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Policy and arrangements for dealing with stress are co-ordinated by Human Resources and Organisational Development. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available to all employees in order to provide confidential guidance or advice on either personal or work related issues as requested. In addition the Council operate a Sickness and Absence Policy with full management and employee participation. Procedures are in place to cover home visits, absentee contact, monitoring arrangements and where necessary support and return to work arrangements.

### ***Working Time***

*The Working Time Regulations cover such areas as pattern of work, daily and weekly rest periods, rest break entitlements, paid annual leave entitlements and night work limits including health assessments. The Council have processes in place to comply with these legal requirements but where there are issues further advice can be sought through the Council's Safety Adviser.*

***Health, Work & Wellbeing***

The Council through this Health & Safety Policy will contribute towards the Government's Health, Work and Wellbeing Programme which aims to prevent people becoming injured or ill, keep them healthy in work and provide accessible support to enable them to remain or return to work more quickly.

Wellbeing for an organisation needs:

- Effective leadership
- Positive environment
- Focus on health
- Optimum work/home balance

The challenge for the Council is keeping employees healthy, at work and where they are absent from work supporting them in their return.

## **Health & Safety Policy Booklet** **Employee Acknowledgement**

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Date.....

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