

WHITCHURCH TOWN COUNCIL SAFETY POLICY (2013)

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INTRODUCTION

This Safety Policy sets out the Council's Policy towards Safety and describes its arrangements and organisation for carrying out this Policy. It supports the Council's broad strategy for Quality, which is contained in its Quality Policy.

The document starts with a **General Statement** of the Council's Policy towards health, safety and welfare and then goes on to describe the **Organisation** for Safety Responsibilities. This is followed by various sections which detail the **Arrangements** designed to cope with hazards associated with particular jobs.

Whitchurch Town Council operates from its offices at the Civic Centre, High Street, Whitchurch, Shropshire, CW12 1BN and a number of other premises and locations within Whitchurch Town.

This version replaces all previous safety policies previously approved by Council.

SECTION 1: GENERAL STATEMENT

Whitchurch Town Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees.

The Council will take all reasonable steps to meet this responsibility, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:-

- Plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe;

- Safe arrangements for the use, handling & storage of articles and substances;
- Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work;
- A safe place of work, safe access and egress;
- A healthy working environment and adequate welfare facilities;
- Regular assessment of risk.

Without detracting from the responsibility of managers for ensuring safe conditions of work, the Council will provide competent technical advice on safety and health matters, where this is necessary to assist line management in its task.

No safety policy is likely to be successful unless it actively involves the views of employees. The Council will consult employees on health and safety matters, either directly or via nominated representatives and will provide them, where necessary, with sufficient facilities and assistance with training to carry out this task.

A copy of this Policy will be issued to all employees and will be available to Members as part of the Constitution. It will be reviewed, added to, or modified from time to time and may be supplemented in appropriate cases by further statements relating to the work of particular groups of staff.

The Council will also undertake to protect, to the best of its ability, the health and safety of all persons coming into contact or being affected by its work activities.

It will look after the health, safety and welfare of volunteers which work with it and will give advice on request to voluntary organisations working in partnership with it. As the Town becomes better promoted there will be more outdoor events in which the Town Council is involved, and which will be assessed on an individual basis.

SECTION 2: ORGANISATION OF SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council

The Council requires its committees, the Town Clerk, managers and all other employees to demonstrate a high concern necessary to secure the highest reasonable standard of health and safety at work.

Revision of Policy

The Council will review, add to, or modify the Safety Policy in accordance with legislation and changes in operational practice and bring to the notice of its employees any such changes as they affect their workplace.

The Council will :-

- Require the Town Clerk to provide it with key information on all likely hazards relating to accidents at work, health risks at work, any loss or damage to Council property and risk to the public;
- Delegate to The Personnel Committee authority to approve and modify The Safety Policy (other than the General Statement & Organisation of responsibilities) and to agree Action Plans to address issues identified through risk assessment.
- On the advice of the Town Clerk, the Council will ensure the provision of adequate funds to ensure that staff and materials are available to meet the health, safety and welfare programme;
- The Council will, through its Personnel Committee review the performance of the Council in the field of health, safety and welfare.

The Town Clerk will:-

- Ensure that the responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are properly assigned and accepted at all levels;
- Ensure that where appropriate, accidents or dangerous occurrences are reported to the Health and Safety Enforcement Agency.

- Ensure Managers and other employees carry out their responsibilities.
- Liaise with appropriate employees or their representatives on all matters concerning safety;
- Carry out all duties assigned to managers in areas of direct responsibility
- Ensure legislation affecting places of work is complied with;
- Ensure that any transport used on Council business is adequately covered by insurance.
- Provide the Council with key health and safety information.
- Ensure the Safety Policy is updated as necessary and that risk assessments are undertaken.
- Ensure that statutory inspections and necessary training is undertaken
- Obtain advice on the Council's health, safety and welfare responsibilities and policies, with particular reference to both current and new regulations and risk assessments.
- Establish the necessary procedures and records to monitor, report and control the Council's obligations as an employer in respect of health, safety and welfare considerations, in full liaison managers and advisors.
- Maintain an Accident Record Book and first aid facility
- Maintain insurances on behalf of the Council.

Managers will:

- Advise the Town Clerk of the need for adequate staff, funds and materials to meet the health, safety and welfare programme of their areas of responsibility;
- Ensure Safe Working Procedures set out in this Policy or in Quality Procedures relevant to the operations and premises under their control are followed.
- Ensure all accidents, dangerous occurrences or incidents (including near misses) with the potential for injury or serious property damage are reported to the Town Clerk, properly investigated and that any remedial action that is necessary to prevent their recurrence is carried out.
- Ensure all items of plant and equipment and any other articles comply with the standards required by the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations, and are tested and examined as necessary to ensure their safe use. That adequate information and training is given for their safe use.
- Ensure that all new equipment etc. received from suppliers is supported with adequate safety data and instructions for safe use;
- Ensure safety and personal protective equipment is issued to and used by employees where necessary.
- Ensure employees have received sufficient training to enable them to carry out their duties safely and records of training are maintained.
- Liaise with the appointed Fire Wardens, to ensure all employees in their Section know what to do in the case of fire and are familiar with the location and operation of fire equipment;
- Ensure all employees in their Section know the whereabouts of the first-aider/ appointed person and first-aid facilities;
- Develop safe practices in their Section to ensure minimum risk for all under their supervision;
- Identify unsafe practices and defects and make recommendations to eliminate them;
- Ensure adequate supervision is available at all times, particularly where young or inexperienced workers are concerned;
- Maintain "good housekeeping" within the Section or premises;
- Ensure that all chemicals are obtained with appropriate health and safety data and are fully assessed for safe use before being introduced in situ.
- That where hazards arise from the installation, commissioning, use and decommissioning of work equipment, the supplier provides information on those hazards and the precautions necessary to control them.
- Ensure suppliers of materials provide information regarding any hazards arising from those materials and any precautions to be taken in their use and storage.
- Ensure when carrying out activities at a customer's site, their health and safety requirements are complied with.

Employees

Under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974,

"It shall be the duty of every employee at work:-

- To take reasonable care for health and safety of him/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts of omissions at work; and
- As regards any duty or requirement imposed on his/her employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with him/her so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with".

All employees are directly responsible to their immediate manager. The Council reminds its employees of their legal obligation and of their duty to co-operate in the operation of this policy by:-

- Working safely and efficiently and within existing legislation;
- Ensuring the safety of themselves, other employees and members of the public;
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare;
- Adhering to Council and section procedures for securing a safe place of work;
- Using any protective equipment provided either under statutory requirements or in work situations where the need has been recognised;
- Reporting incidents that have led or may lead to injury or damage, using the agreed procedures and report forms;
- Assisting in the investigation of accidents with the object of introducing measures to prevent recurrence;
- Reporting all hazards and defects to their manager, with particular emphasis on defective plant and equipment.

Communication

The Council will ensure that it fulfils its statutory duties in communicating all relevant information to its employees regarding Health and Safety.

Health and Safety issues should be resolved at the lowest level practicable as follows

- Where an employee has a safety problem he/she should first discuss the matter with his/her immediate supervisor or manager
- If the problem is not resolved, the employee may then discuss the matter with an Employee Representative (where appointed).
- If the problem is not resolved at this level, the employee or Employee Representative may contact the Town Clerk.

The Council will consult its employees through its managers (and employee representatives where appointed) regarding changes in premises, plant or work activity liable to affect their health, safety and welfare at work and in addition:-

- The Health and Safety Law Poster describing the duties of both the Council and it's employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act is displayed on the Notice Board at all of the Council's premises.
- The Council's Employee Liability Insurance Certificate is displayed.

Employee representatives

The Council will recognise formal safety representatives appointed by a trade union or other representative of the employees and assist them in improving safety standards. Their role is to:-

- Represent an employee in resolving a health and safety issue
- Discuss safety standards and ways of improving standards with Colleagues
- Help management to consult with staff and raise their awareness on health and safety matters.
- Look for hazards or unsafe practices and advise management.

Insurance

The Council will maintain insurance cover, including: Employee Liability; Vehicle insurance; public liability; product liability; material damage to premises, furniture and fittings; cover for money and fidelity insurance; libel and slander; personal accident of officers and Members; legal expenses; engineering cover for lifting equipment and pressure vessels.

ARRANGEMENTS

SECTION 3: FIRE, FIRST AID AND ACCIDENTS

FIRE

DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES: Preventative

- Be vigilant, keep a look out for poor housekeeping, blocked escape routes, fire doors are not left open, missing signs or damaged fire extinguishers and advise your manager.
- At public meetings ensure the House Keeping & Emergency instructions are read out and pass instructions to all hirers of rooms.
- Each workplace is subject to a fire risk assessment arranged by the Town Clerk or on his instruction a safety advisor, who will be assisted in this by someone with working knowledge of the area. Always cooperate with this
- Notice Boards contain a line diagram of the premises on which are marked the **Fire Escape Routes, Fire Alarm Points** and location of **Fire Extinguishers**. Please familiarise yourself with this-Do not wait for a fire.

DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES: Fire Action

- **On discovering a fire, RAISE THE ALARM** by operating the nearest fire alarm point.
- Phone the Fire Service directly (Dial 999 & ask for Fire). Try not to panic and give clear instructions as to the exact location of the outbreak.
- Fire extinguishers are positioned primarily to assist your escape from the building. Only attempt to extinguish a fire if this can be done **without personal risk**. You must be confident how to operate an extinguisher safely and what type to use before you use it. **IF IN DOUBT, GET OUT.**

Types of Fire Extinguisher

- **ALL RED** – Water extinguisher. Suitable for use on paper and textiles. **NEVER** on electrical or flammable liquid fires.
- **RED WITH BLUE BAND** – Dry powder extinguisher. Use on **any** type of fire.
- **RED WITH BLACK BAND** – Carbon dioxide gas. Suitable for **any** fire.
- **RED WITH CREAM BAND** – Foam extinguisher. Best for liquid fires. See instructions for use.

Evacuation Procedure on Hearing the Fire Alarm

- Leave the building by the nearest escape route and proceed to the Nominated Assembly Point which are identified on the Notice Boards
- Close doors behind you if safe to do so.
- Act quickly, but do not panic.
- Guide any members of the public, visitors or contractors during the evacuation and also ensure they leave by the nearest route. Have particular regard to those with disabilities, the elderly or children.
- Report to your Fire Warden (or person in charge) at the assembly point, inform them of any persons who cannot be accounted for.
- Do not return to the building unless you have instructions from the most senior staff member present that it is safe to do so.

Evacuation in the case of other Emergencies

- If there is a likelihood of danger to the occupants of a building for whatever reason, the building must be evacuated.
- The normal fire alarm will be used to warn people to leave, initiated by the most senior staff member present.
- In this case, employees will assemble at an assembly point, as instructed by the Fire Wardens. For security reasons, this may not be the normal fire assembly point. Otherwise, the normal fire evacuation procedure will be followed.
- The most senior staff member present will need to accompany the Police to search the building if necessary.

DUTIES OF FIRE WARDENS

There are, in each workplace, persons nominated as Fire Wardens who have specific duties in the event of fire:

- To assist with the safe evacuation of the building on the sounding of an alarm by supervising the evacuation of their work area.
 - To help particularly those who are elderly, young or disabled.
 - To ensure no one is left in the building after evacuation.
 - To carry out a roll call for their area if appropriate.
 - To designate necessary personnel to guard entrances to or sections of the building for security and prevent entry by unauthorised persons.
 - To undertake statutory fire drills under the direction of their manager and to assist with weekly alarm tests, if required.
 - To fill in the fire logbook in connection with fire alarm testing, drills, etc. if required.
-

FIRST AID

The Council will assess its requirements for competent first aid, providing a proportionate response to their first aid needs. It will take into account not only the needs of employees and volunteers but also the public using its services.

It will provide a First Aid Room in Civic Centre where the accident book, rest facilities, defibrillator and main first aid box will be kept. Details of the nearest Emergency hospital and the address of the Local Health and Safety Enforcement Agency and Employment Medical Advisory Services will be available there.

First Aid boxes and accident books will be kept at all other premises where people are based and first aid boxes in all Council vehicles

A list of First Aiders and Emergency First Aiders will be displayed on notice boards.

The Council will maintain trained First Aiders or Emergency First Aiders to meet its requirements. There will always be a trained person on duty at the Civic Centre when open to the public.

Duties of First Aiders or Emergency First Aiders

- To give basic first aid in accordance with their qualifications.
- To use the defibrillator when trained to do so.
- To ensure that the contents of the first aid box are maintained, in accordance with the requirements of the Council.
- To ensure that accidents reported to them are recorded in the accident book and the appropriate Manager is given the necessary information to complete the accident report form.

All Employees should contact the nearest available First Aider/ appointed person (See Fire Action Notices) in the event of injury or accident.

Other Persons (e.g. Visitors & Contractors)

All other persons on Council premises must observe the Council's safety regulations and instructions given by persons enforcing its Safety Policy. Where applicable, contractors must deposit the Whitchurch Town Council Guide for Contractors with their own employees and ensure they understand the relevant sections.

ACCIDENTS

Accident Reporting

Accidental injury or ill health, no matter how trivial it may appear at the time, must be reported in the Accident Book (B1510) and full details notified to your Manager using the Accident Form available in the Accident Book. Serious incidents must be immediately reported verbally. Incidents which may or may not result in personal injury, but which cause damage to plant or equipment and near misses, should also be reported on the Health and Safety Near Miss form found at the same location. They should be handed to your manager or the Town Clerk who will investigate, or if serious arrange for a safety advisor to investigate.

The importance of reporting "near misses" cannot be overstated. They should be seen as a warning, which, if heeded can prevent a more serious incident or accident. There is a proven correlation between the number of near misses and the number of accidents.

SECTION 4: OFFICE SAFETY

Introduction

DO

- Know the location of the fire fighting equipment and learn how to use it.
- Remember the fire instructions and means of escape. Treat a fire drill as the real thing.
- Keep all means of escape free from obstruction.
- Look out for faulty electrical appliances or overloaded sockets and report defects to your Manager at once.
- If you find inadequate guards to dangerous parts of machinery such as guillotines or shredders, report them to your Manager at once.
- Ensure fixtures, shelving, racking etc. are stable and free from defects.
- No additional electrical appliances will be used in offices without permission from the Manager.
- Additional heating appliances, such as electric fires, should also be placed in a position of safety and away from furniture and clothing.
- Know where to get first aid equipment, if required. The position and the identity of persons trained in first aid should be displayed on The Council notice board. Inform your first aider if you use any of the first aid box contents so that they may be replaced.
- Report any items that you think may affect safety.
- Report any accidents to your Manager in the first instance.
- Ask for assistance when any item to be moved is too heavy or awkward for you to lift alone.(see Section 7 Manual Handling). Remember when you are about to lift something heavy to bend at the knees and keep your back straight.
- Make sure that when carrying loads you can see properly, particularly the floor surface.
- Only fill filing cabinets from the bottom in the first place and only open one drawer at a time. Keep a lookout for rough edges on all office furniture.
- Ensure that no loose or trailing leads from electrical equipment or telephones create a hazard. Do not pass wires under carpets unless they are protected by secure non-protruding channels as they may wear unnoticed and would create a serious fire or electrocution hazard.
- Secure the cap to any container, particularly with flammable liquid therein. Ensure that flammable substances are kept away from heat. Always return containers to their proper storage places.
- Report any light that is not working.
- Extend good manners to any person using or about to use any door.

- Report any worn or defective floor covering or broken furniture.
- Pay attention to good housekeeping; clean floors of items dropped; and mop up any spillages.
- Implement the laid down procedure where a suspicious object is noticed or found in any office or public building (see below).
- Use handrails when ascending or descending stairs.
- Strictly follow manufacturer's instructions when using any chemicals and use protective clothing or equipment where required.

DO NOT

- Leave items on stairs or steps.
- Leave filing cabinet drawers or desk drawers open.
- Use the top drawer only of filing cabinets, when the drawer is opened the cabinet can become unstable.
- Climb on a chair to reach items. Suitable steps will be made available.
- Tamper with electrical appliances and lighting in an attempt to repair faulty plugs, sockets or appliances.
- Use multiple adaptors as circuit loading could result in fire.
- Attempt to use machinery that you have reported as suspect or defective until the problem has been solved or repairs carried out - disconnect totally.
- No person under 18 years of age may clean any machinery if this imposes him/her to risk injury from a moving part of that or any adjacent machine.
- Place yourself at risk either in the office or on steps or stairs by wearing footwear which may be fashionable in style, but has poor regard to safety.
- Expose flammable liquids to direct heat.
- Ignore the No Smoking Policy in the building.
- Rock back on the two rear legs of your chair, loss of balance can bring about a serious injury.
- Run in corridors or stairs, not even in an emergency.
- Use fire escapes other than in emergencies or in the event of fire drill.
- Stack objects or stationery in such a way as to create a hazard.
- Place any cleaning liquid (e.g. detergents) into alternative containers unless the container is clearly and correctly labelled and kept in a safe place.

COMPUTER SAFETY

Computers may be called Display Screen Equipment (DSE), Visual Display Units (VDU's) and the immediate environment where they are used i.e. desk/chair etc. is referred to as a workstation.

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations, 1992 regulate the use of computers at work and refer to the persons affected as "users". "Users" are persons who "habitually use VDU's as a significant part of their normal work and regularly work on display screens for two/three hours each day or continuously for more than one hour spells". The Regulations also apply to employees working at home.

It is important that a correct assessment of your workstation is done to highlight any problems that must be reported to your supervisor - this can be done using the Workstation Assessment Questionnaire. Completed Questionnaires should be sent to your Manager.

If you are a "defined computer user":-

- Your workstation must be designed for computer use. There must be sufficient space to position your keyboard so that you can rest your wrists in front of it;
- The screen should be fully adjustable and must be positioned to avoid glare from lights, windows etc.;
- Your chair must be of the fully adjustable type with five castors and must be adjusted to support your lower back. It must be set at the correct height for your desk. Your feet should rest on the floor and you may need a footrest;
- Report eyestrain, headaches or aching limbs to your manager. The Council will pay for your eye test if you are a defined user;

- Ensure your computer has an adjustable keyboard;
- Ensure your working environment is comfortable. Problems with ventilation, temperature or lighting should be reported to your Manager.

SUSPECT LETTERS AND PACKAGES

Advice to Employees Sorting and Opening Mail

The following aspects of a letter or package should arouse your suspicion:-

- FOREIGN WRITING, no return address, addressed to someone long gone from the organisation;
- Packages out of balance or excess weight for the size of the package;
- Having grease marks, smelling of almonds or marzipan or leaking powder;
- Wire protruding, springiness in the top, bottom or sides, the flap totally sealed (there should be small gaps for a letter opener).

Actions to take

The package or letter may contain explosives, but there have also been concerns about biological hazards such as Anthrax have arisen. In all cases, you should act with extreme care and caution. Employees should inform their manager who must notify the Police on 999.

If explosives are suspected, the building should be evacuated by activating the fire alarm and following the procedure previously outlined for emergency evacuation. If possible, the potential explosive should be placed in an open area, away from the public, which can be made secure.

If a biological threat is suspected, the emphasis should be on containment by placing the package in a sealable container or simply closing the door on the room and evacuating the building.

Any person coming into contact with a potential bio-hazard should:-

- Wash their hands immediately;
- Change their clothes and shower as soon as possible, placing contaminated clothes in a sealed bag.

The manager should present the Emergency Services with a list of persons who have had contact with the bio-hazard. It is worth remembering that a bio-hazard like Anthrax is more likely to get into the body by SKIN CONTACT than by being BREATHED IN.

SECTION 5: PERSONAL SAFETY

Lone Worker Policy

Lone working is any situation where a person is working out of contact with fellow workers and:

- a. they cannot be checked frequently by a supervisor or colleague
- b. they cannot summon assistance if they get in difficulty such as being injured
- c. they are out of earshot of and cannot see other employees
- d. they are working in several different areas and their precise whereabouts at any one time cannot be known.

There are different types of lone working involving different risks to different groups of people.

A member of staff working alone away from the premises, particularly at night, may be at the highest risk. Staff in this position should always notify their manager in advance of what they are doing. They may use the Key Holder Service for which the Council has a contract, by advising their call centre of their whereabouts and requesting a periodic phone call to check they are alright. A non response would trigger a callout. Civic Centre Caretaking Staff are expected, outside office hours to use the Key Holder Service in accordance with the Operating Procedure. A person working alone in an office whose location is known and has direct access to a telephone is considered to be at less risk, but if alone on

the premises out of hours will be at increased risk if no one knows they are there. Again the Key Holder Service may be available.

Some staff will at times work from home, be alone in their car or may be visiting clients' premises. Each manager needs to establish the level of risk associated with these activities taking into account what type of emergency is likely to occur to the person and how easily they could summon help. If the person is with a vehicle, communication should be provided already by a mobile phone.

Always make sure someone knows where you are, when you are likely to return and, if possible, how to contact you.

With lesser risks, the Council will ensure the person has access to a mobile phone, adopt a procedure for its use and where appropriate will contribute towards its cost.

Fire Safety

The General Office will keep a whiteboard listing staff who are at work on any particular day. This is in addition to the lone worker arrangements listed above and is primarily for fire safety purposes (although it does support the lone worker arrangements)

Prevention of Assault from Members of the Public

It is a sad fact that the incidence of verbal and physical assault on staff is increasing and Employees in contact with the public must be aware of situations that may lead to an incident.

- A normal, polite and helpful matter will avoid most incidents, however, never retaliate in any way, even if provoked. Walk away from a dispute rather than suffer physical violence.
- If you feel that a situation is becoming tense, ask a senior employee to help.
- You should judge whether to take a customer into a private room or whether to see them in an open public space.
- Give customers the opportunity to "let off steam", but if you feel they are too abusive or they make threats, you should ask them to leave. If you ask someone to leave, alert other staff.
- If you or other staff feel a customer is "potentially violent" (PVP), customers should be cleared from the area immediately. If a known PVP enters a reception area, customers can be cleared, as a precaution.
- If a customer does not leave when asked, alert the Police. If calling for assistance, you should inform the customer and other staff. Other members of staff are responsible for making sure no other customers are at risk.
- All reasonable actions will be supported.

Remember that the way in which you approach a property and knock on the door or ring the bell is important. Things like continuous ringing of the bell, peering through windows or letterboxes, tapping on a window etc. can cause an occupant to be agitated before they even open the door.

When you have knocked on the door, take two steps back and to one side, but still keep in view. This gives you chance to avoid vicious dogs suddenly running out. Also, see if anyone is watching from a window.

Once inside the property, familiarise yourself with your surroundings, look for obstacles on the way out, without making it too obvious. If the occupant verbally abuses you, leave at once, trying not to turn your back on the occupant.

The Lone Worker guidelines give general advice, which may not cover all situations.

Where special circumstances exist regarding specific situations where workers work alone, a specific risk assessment should be done.

Training

All persons who may be at risk of experiencing violence at work should undergo conflict resolution training so that they can recognise a potentially dangerous situation and take action before it develops.

Interviews

When you are conducting an interview, make sure that you can get out of the room quickly and safely if you need to. Position yourself close to the door. Familiarise yourself with any panic buttons or other arrangements there to summon help if needed.

If, during an interview, a client becomes aggressive towards you or makes remarks which make you feel uncomfortable, then make an excuse and leave as soon as possible. Make sure the incident is reported to your manager as a near miss as soon as possible.

Security at the Civic Centre

The Civic Centre is a large building with a number of accesses and areas which are difficult to observe. All events are assessed at the time of booking as to whether a security doorman (doormen) are required. Where they are not, support of the response team from the Key Holder Service can be sought if necessary, for situations which do not require an immediate police presence.

Alcohol & Substance Abuse Policy

- Illegal drugs or substances must not be brought on to the Council's premises.
- Any individual thought to be under the influence of excess alcohol or drug will be escorted from the premises may be subject to action under the laid down disciplinary procedures.
- If you are taking drugs prescribed by your doctor, that may give rise to side effects which could affect your performance at work, it would be helpful if you would advise the Town Clerk.
- Do not drink and drive.

SAFETY AWAY FROM THE COUNCIL'S PREMISES

General

The majority of staff work on one or more of the Council's premises for the most of their working day, however there are exceptions including:

- Staff travelling between sites or attending training courses.
- Staff attending off –site meetings.
- Staff visiting clients, stakeholders or partners at their premises.
- Staff working in the public realm

There is added risk because they will often be unfamiliar with the premises or site and do not have the immediate support of management or colleagues.

NB The precautions below may serve as general guidelines, but risk assessments must be applied to any hazardous operation, to develop a safe method of work for any specified tasks.

Customers Premises

- If you leave the office, always advise someone where you are going, how you can be contacted and the approximate time of your return. If you feel uneasy about going somewhere alone, ask a colleague to accompany you.
- Always make yourself aware of any hazards likely to be encountered. Take notice of safety and emergency instructions issued by the occupiers of the premises being visited. Be particularly careful if entering onto potentially derelict or contaminated land - **the dangers may not be obvious;**
- Where a site visit is likely to involve a risk, e.g. construction site or factory, always ensure you are accompanied by another person familiar with the site;
- Do not enter sites or premises where construction works are in progress without first seeking permission from the person having overall control;
- Do not enter excavations or climb ladders, stairways or walkways or use hoists or scaffolding unless authorised to do so by the person in charge and further having received that persons assurance that the equipment is safe to use or that the place is a "safe place";
- Always wear the appropriate protective clothing supplied by this Council or the Council being visited;
- Do not handle equipment or machinery that you are unfamiliar with;

- Under no circumstances must an employee carry out work inside premises which are, in his opinion, dangerous;
- Do not enter areas where the visibility is reduced to a level considered dangerous by you either by a lack of natural or artificial light or by contamination of the atmosphere;
- Electric shock is a major hazard and employees should be aware of the basic dangers of electricity. Under no circumstances should electrical appliances or switch gear be tampered with. If an employee has evidence to suggest that an electrical fault exists on any premises, he/she should seek the support of a qualified electrician;
- Always beware of persons carrying materials and moving about.
- If an employee is in any doubt concerning hazards encountered in the course of his duty, he should not take risks, but report his findings to his/her manager.
- Always report any unsafe act or hazard situations to the site management and to your own manager.
- Beware of danger from falling items. Always wear a safety hat if there is a risk.
- Be aware of potential hazards from walking on uneven surfaces, loose waste materials, water and mud.

Noise

If it is necessary to work in a noisy environment, ensure that adequate ear protection is provided by site management. If no such equipment is available, report the matter to your Manager.

Under the Noise at Work Regulations there is a duty to reduce the risk of hearing damage as far as is reasonably practicable.

1. Where there is a significant risk of damage to the hearing of employees a suitable and sufficient assessment of their exposure shall be carried out.
2. The findings of the assessment are to be communicated to those employees who are affected.
3. The assessment will be reviewed when it is suspected that exposures have changed.
4. Noise exposures will be reduced, so far as is reasonably practicable, where they are above the Second Action Level of the Regulations, by means other than ear protection.
5. Where new plant or equipment is to be brought on site suppliers must provide information on the noise levels it is likely to produce. Where these are above the Action Levels specified in the Regulations, adequate noise reduction measures must be incorporated.
6. Where exposure levels cannot be reduced below the Action Levels required by the Regulations, ear protection will be issued:
 - a. where daily Personal Noise Exposures are at or exceed the First Action Level of 85 dB(A), ear protection will be provided to employees upon their request;
 - b. where daily Noise Exposures are at or exceed the Second Action Level of 90 dB(A) or Peak Action Level of 140 dB(C) (200Pa), ear protection must be worn by employees;
 - c. ear protection will also be made available upon request to those employees who are exposed to levels below the First Action Level who require it for personal comfort;
- 7 Employees must:
 - (1) use the Ear Protection and Noise Control Equipment provided in accordance with the Regulations;
 - (2) take reasonable care of Ear Protection and Noise Control Equipment and report any defects.

Working at Home.

Working at home is usually a safe environment because you are familiar with it, however it will not have been assessed by Management in the way the Council's own premises have. There are still a few things to look out for.

- Space may be a problem particularly if you take home equipment and files. So be orderly in your work area.
- Ensure you still take a break
- Look at the Lone Worker guidance above.
- Make sure you operate your computer in a proper environment. The Computer Safety guidance in Section 4 Office Safety is just as important when working at home.

SECTION 6: STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Introduction

This guide is designed to:-

- Help you understand what stress is;
- Identify some of the symptoms of stress;
- Identify some of the causes of stress;
- Suggest some positive actions you can take to manage workplace stress;
- Give managers guidelines for good practice in stress management;
- Give information about further sources of stress.

There is, no specific legislation on controlling stress at work and not enough is known to set detailed standards or requirements, however :-

- Employers have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that their workplaces are safe and health;
- Under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, employers are obliged to assess the nature and scale of risks to health in the workplace and base control measures upon them;
- The Working Time Regulations were introduced as it has long been recognised that excessive working hours are inadequate rest breaks could affect employees health and safety;
- Employees also have a responsibility for the health, welfare and safety of themselves and others whilst at work.

Policy Statement

The Council accepts its responsibility to create a working environment, which provides support for all employees and harnesses the positive aspects of stress while keeping the adverse effects to a minimum. It is recognised that employees may face stress as a result of their work or their personal life and that while some stress is beneficial there is a point beyond which it has an adverse effect on individuals and on the organisation. The Council will take a positive approach to stress issues and will not treat the lack of ability to cope with a job through stress as a competency issue, except as a last resort when all other options have been exhausted.

The Council recognises that its business may result in uneven distribution of workload and some very busy periods. It encourages its staff to talk to managers if they experience stress and will offer as much support as possible.

Understanding Stress

The subject of stress is complex and there are many theories and suggestions as to both the definition and causes of stress. There is a widespread misunderstanding of the term “stress”. Most people confuse the term “pressure” with the term “stress” which is the reaction to excessive pressures.

The HSE defines stress as **“the reaction that people have, who are exposed to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them, to the extent that they feel they are unable to cope”**.

Stress can be positive or negative. Some pressure can be beneficial and can keep us motivated, give a sense of achievement and provide job satisfaction. However inappropriate levels of pressure, either too much or too little, can lead to negative stress, as follows :-

Negative Stress is a result of:-

1. A mismatch between the demands made on us and our real or perceived ability to cope;
2. Over or under stimulation which leads to actual or potential ill health;
3. High demand plus high constraint plus low support i.e. few choices about how and when work is done, very little say in decision making and lots of rules and procedures.

When an individual feels threatened, the body's natural defence mechanism goes into action, (the stress response) releasing hormones such as adrenaline, to help us to cope with immediate physical threat. Sometimes the body may not be able to deal with stress-inducing situations at work, such as proposals for job change, deadlines or targets, which seem impossible to meet. In these circumstances, the body may well continue to produce stress hormones, which can result in a variety of mental, physical and emotional symptoms. Over a long period of time, stress can adversely affect your health if not dealt with.

Workers suffering from stress may also be at increased risk of accidents due to their lack of concentration, thus putting themselves and others at risk.

Potential sources of stress

The first stage of managing stress in the workplace is to identify the wide variety stressors that may be present, both work related or non-work related. It is important to realise that although non-work related stressors are beyond the control of the Council, a flexible and sympathetic approach to such situations by management can ease the pressure on an individual to the extent that illness and subsequent absences from work may not occur.

Work Related	Non Work Related
Responsibility	Financial stability
Work Load	Caring responsibilities
Conflict/Relations with colleagues	Death of close relative/partner/friend
Career development	Relationship breakdown
Job threat/Security	Moving house
Organisational culture	Family problems
Organisational structure	Alcohol/substance misuse
Morale	Domestic violence
Autonomy over work	
Participation	
Harassment and Bullying	
Ambiguity of job role	
Shift work	
Poor working environment	
Organisational change	
Excessive work hours	
Lone working	
Violence/verbal abuse	
Discrimination	
Job change/redeployment	

Signs and Symptoms of stress

Signs and symptoms of stress vary from one individual to another but can include :-

Emotional Signs	Behavioural Signs	Physical Signs
Swings in mood	More accident prone	Rapid weight gain or loss
Increased worrying	Poor work	Pain and tightness in the chest
Irritability	Increased smoking	Palpitations
Feeling tense	Increased consumption of alcohol	Breathlessness
Drained, no enthusiasm	Increased dependence on drugs	Indigestion or Nausea
Cynical	Over eating or loss of appetite	Headaches
Feeling nervous, apprehensive, anxious	Poor time management	Muscle twitches
Feeling of helplessness	Change in sleep pattern	Tiredness
Loss of confidence	Difficulty in sleeping	Vague aches and pains
Lack of self esteem	Waking tired	Skin irritation or rashes
Lack of concentration	Loss of interest in sex	Fainting
Withdrawal into daydreams	Withdrawal from supportive relationships	Frequent colds, flu or other infections
	Too busy to relax	Recurrence of previous illnesses
	Not looking after yourself	Constipation or diarrhoea
		Alteration of the menstrual pattern in women

Primary Control Measures –Stress Prevention

These control measures can be used to either eliminate or reduce exposure to stressors and as such are the best way to tackle stress. Because they are preventative measures, they also tend in the long term to be the most effective. They also have additional benefits such as increasing employee attendance, increasing output and performance and increasing staff morale, as follows :-

<u>Stress Factors</u>	<u>Primary Control Measures</u>
Job Design	Consideration should be given to job variety wherever possible. Proper use should be made of employee's skills, their responsibilities should be clearly laid out in accurate job descriptions and employees should be clear about the tasks they have to carry out.
Workload	Work targets should be realistic and achievable without the input of excessive hours. They should ensure that the employee is working at their optimum level.
Working Environment	Effective management of hazards, including reduction of noise, fumes etc. and provision of a comfortable working environment.
Relationship with colleagues	Personnel systems established for dealing with staff conflict, bullying and harassment etc.
Provision of resources	Adequate resources provided for staff to carry out their job effectively.
Management Culture	Clear aims and objectives; Effective two-way communication; Employee involvement in decision making; Management Training; Employee involved in organisation of their workload; Employees informed of any major changes to take place.

Secondary Control Measures-Stress Management

These measures are less effective for the employer as control is only exercised after the event has occurred. Secondary control measures should be seen therefore as an addition rather than a separate option for employees. No matter how well primary control measures are managed, there may be occasions where individuals suffer stress. In such a case, it is essential that the employee receives support to cope with work demands and that any necessary changes are introduced.

Possible options include:-

- Managers and colleagues to provide support;
- Stress counselling for work related stress (via an appointed doctor);
- Ensuring effective policies/procedures are in place to deal with health issues such as alcohol/substance misuse.

Self Awareness

- Don't be at the mercy of the environment. Cut out non-essential phone calls and visitors; concentrate on things that really must be done.
- Learn to delegate. Make a point of slightly increasing the amount you delegate each week. Write this down so that you can actually see what is happening.
- Space out your work each day by taking short rest pauses. Don't try to work non-stop through the whole day but pace yourself. Take a few minutes in the middle of the morning and a few minutes in the afternoon to relax.

- Be tidy and organised. Untidiness tends to create a sense of time urgency.
- Take a defined lunch break. Don't snatch a sandwich while working. Sit down and eat in a relaxed way and if at all possible, go away from your workstation to eat.
- Learn to say "No". Don't simply take on everything that comes your way. Examine your commitments over the past week and ask how many of these you really needed to accept and how many could have been passed on or done more effectively by someone else.
- Set appropriate time schedules. Don't rush round frantically. Pace yourself, go at a steady rate – if you can't do everything without rushing frantically around then you've got too much to do or you are not well organised.
- Don't put things off. Plan things in advance. If you need half an hour to prepare for an important meeting or event, do this well in advance with as few interruptions as possible. By doing this, you can avoid feelings of time pressure.
- Eat properly. Avoid too much fat and sugar. Eat to enjoy your food but don't over eat – make a point of introducing more fresh fruit, vegetables and high fibre foods.
- Physical fitness – you will be better able to deal with stress if you are physically fit. Do a little light exercise every other day. Aim to avoid being too sedentary.
- Only drink alcohol in moderation.
- Only smoke in moderation or preferably not at all. You are more likely to succeed in giving up the habit if you try to do so when life's stresses are reasonably low.
- Many busy and energetic people are bad listeners, they do too much talking, monopolise conversation and narrow the talk to what they will say next rather than listening carefully. This can cause stress for others, so should be avoided.

Managers' Guidelines

It is not easy for staff to manage stress at work if their manager does not do so. A stressed manager has less time and patience to listen to staff and will subsequently be poor at planning and prioritising workloads. People learn by example and managers set the tone or culture for their part of the organisation.

As a manager, consider whether you do the following:-

1. Take all possible steps to make your staff's work interesting and rewarding;
2. Keep your eyes open for physical indications and signs of stress;
3. Encourage your staff to talk about how they feel and the demands you make on them;
4. Give your staff sufficient support in the event of changes of work practice;
5. Know everyone well enough to be aware when they are stressed;
6. Consider how best to involve your staff if you are planning changes;
7. Listen to what your staff have to say;
8. Be aware of changes in patterns of accidents or absence in your department;
9. Approach counselling situations positively and confidently;
10. Know how each individual is likely to react to an increase in workload or responsibility;
11. Identify and discuss your training requirements.

Making a positive effort in applying the above will further reduce stress for your staff.

SECTION 7: MANUAL HANDLING

Introduction

The term "manual handling" refers to the movement or support of any load by physical effort. It includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, moving and using mechanical aids such as trolleys.

Manual handling injuries are the most common type of injury in the workplace.

They can include spinal disc injuries, damage to muscles, ligaments and tendon, trapped nerved, cuts and abrasions etc.

If it is reasonably practicable, the operation should be mechanised or automated.

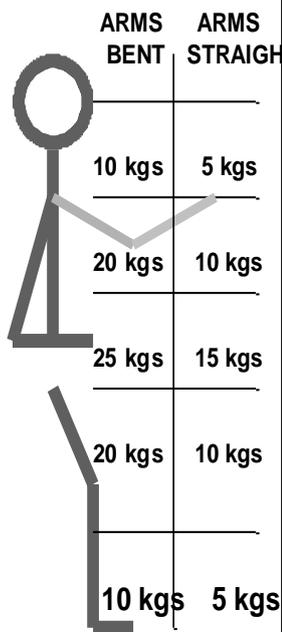
If this is not possible, then the risk of injury must be reduced to the lowest level practical. A Manual Handling assessment must be carried out to determine the best ways to control the risk. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations, require employers to make detailed assessments of lifting operations in certain circumstances where there is considerable risk of injury.

The following simple guidelines are issued as a guide to staff. It is the Council's policy that all employees involved in manual handling operations will receive training for jobs where specific manual handling risks of injury have been identified.

The Right and Wrong Ways of Lifting a Load

- Test the weight of the object to be lifted. If the load is too heavy or obscures your vision, ask for help. If it is heavy can it be broken down into smaller loads?
- Check the size and shape. Can it be gripped properly, does it have sharp or slippery edges. Protective gloves should be worn if necessary. Decide how and where to grip it.
- Check the route where you will carry the load for obstructions, trip or slip hazards.
- Know where and how you will put the load down.
- If you are able to lift the load, gain a firm footing and a comfortable grip on the item to be lifted. Ensure that you have good balance.
- Keep your head up, back straight and knees bent, lift from the knees and use your leg muscles to make the lift.
- Hold the load close to the body.
- Do not carry a load that obscures your vision.
- Do not twist the body. Change direction by moving the feet.

Assessing the Load



Is the load too heavy? The maximum load that an individual can lift will depend on each person's capability and the position of the load relative to the body. There is therefore no safe load HSE guidance does not recommend that loads in excess of 25Kg should be lifted or carried by a man (and this is only permissible when the load is at the level of the thighs.) For women the guideline figures should be reduced by about a third. The risk assessment will however take into account other factors such as the frequency of the task.

Is the load too bulky or unwieldy? In general, if any dimension of the load exceeds 0.75 m, its handling may pose a risk of injury.

Is the load difficult to grasp? Grip difficulties will be caused by slippery surfaces, rounded corners or lack of foot room.

Are the contents of the load likely to shift? This is a particular problem in a container of smaller items. e.g. a sack full of bearings.

Is the load sharp, hot or cold? Personal protective equipment may be required.

SECTION 8: PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT

- Personal protection equipment (PPE) is issued to employees to prevent them from various hazards they encounter in the workplace.
- Depending on the nature of your job, it may include jackets, gloves, safety footwear, masks, ear protection etc.
- The nature of the personal protection equipment should be identified by a risk assessment, which has taken place on the activity concerned.
- If you are required to work in wet conditions, hi-vis waterproofs are provided.
- Safety boots, fully conforming to BSI specification, are issued if necessary and it is a job requirement that these are worn at all times. Other employees who are visitors to certain locations such as depots, construction sites etc. will also need safety footwear, head protection etc.
- Hand protection – various types of gloves are available and should be worn whenever hazards such as sharp objects, chemicals are present. The type of gloves issued is job specific and should be identified by risk assessment.
- Head protection if there is a danger of something dropping on to you, such as on a building site.
- Hearing protection.
- Face masks for both fume and dust

All protective clothing & equipment are made available through your Manager.

All employees are required to look after their personal protection equipment, not lose it or damage it wilfully. It must be stored correctly. Defects with personal protection equipment, lack of personal protection equipment or any unsuitability for use must be reported promptly to your manager.

It is worth remembering that personal protection equipment is a LAST RESORT. Other control measures for controlling risks should be in place first, for example, gloves will not adequately protect an employee from the moving parts of unguarded equipment.

New employees should be made aware of the need for personal protection equipment in their Health and Safety induction and employees are not allowed to start work without the correct personal protection equipment.

SECTION 9: WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS

INTRODUCTION

Many jobs involve working with contractors and in these circumstances both parties have duties.

As client, the Council has a duty to:-

- Select contractors with reasonable care – to ensure they have the competence to do the job. This will involve checking a contractors' ability to manage health and safety, membership of trade association etc.
- To issue them with the Council's Guide to Contractors (person responsible for awarding the contract);
- To ensure that the contractor is reasonably safe to use the premises for the purpose they have been invited for;
- To include them as "persons affected" in our risk assessments;
- To provide the contractor with any information on Special Risks they may encounter;
- To clearly identify the job to be done.

As a contractor, they have a duty to:-

- Conform to the Council's Guide to Contractors;
- Provide a risk assessment if the job involves significant risk;
- Co-operate with our Health and Safety arrangements (emergency evacuation etc.).

CONSTRUCTION WORKS

Any construction job comes under the CDM (Construction, Design and Management) Regulations 2007. The key aim of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 is to integrate health and safety into the management of the project, to identify hazards early so they can be eliminated or minimised and achieve good safety standards by making the systems as simple as possible.

If the project's construction phase is likely to involve more than 30 working days or 500 person days, it requires prior notification to the Health & Safety Executive. This places specific duties on the Client, CDM coordinator, Principal Contractor, Contractors and Designers. All must communicate, cooperate and coordinate their activities.

- Client –Means any person for whom a project is carried out, whether it is carried out by another person or is carried out in-house.
- CDM Coordinator must be appointed by the client as an advisor and can be a suitably qualified individual or a company and can be part of the client's organisation, one of the project designers or some other person, partnership or organisation.
- Designer –Means any person who carries on a trade, business or other undertaking in connection with which he prepares a design or arranges for any person under his control to prepare a design relating to a structure or part of a structure.
- Principal Contractor –is appointed by the client to plan, manage and control health and safety during the construction phase of the project.
- The Client should ensure that competent persons are appointed and adequate resources are available for carrying out their health and safety responsibilities.
- The CDM Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the Health & Safety Executive is notified of the project, which should be in writing and on form F10.
- The CDM Coordinator must prepare pre-construction health & safety information and make it available to all others with responsibilities.
- The Client must ensure that the Principal Contractor has prepared a suitable health and safety plan before any construction work starts, and then sign it off.
- The Principal Contractor is responsible for arranging competent and adequately resourced contractors to carry out the work where it is sub-contracted, obtaining from contractors the main findings of their risk assessments and details of how they intend to carry out high risk operations, ensuring that contractors have information about risks on site and ensuring that workers are adequately trained.
- Principal Contractors should monitor health and safety performances, make information available to the CDM Coordinator for the Health and Safety file and fully ensure that all contractors and workers comply with any site rules.
- On completion of the works, the CDM Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the Health and Safety file is fully completed and formally handed to the Client.

Whitchurch Town Council

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CONTRACTORS

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CONTRACTORS

- 1 This Council has a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 not only to its own employees, but to any Contractor or Sub-Contractor who undertakes work on their behalf.
- 2 Any guidance offered by the Council in the area of Health and Safety shall not affect the position of the Council in Contract or Tort which would otherwise exist between the Council and the Contractor.
- 3 The Council promotes a positive safety culture and insists Contractors play their part.
- 4 This document is not a **Safety Policy** for Contractors. It is a guide for your statutory and legal duties.
- 5 The Construction, Design and Management Regulations 1994 (As amended 2000) apply to all demolition work and to certain projects dependent on time period and man hours. They impose additional health and safety requirements on the parties concerned.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTRACTORS

1 INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, place a duty upon the Council to ensure that all property it controls is safe for its employees.

Therefore the requirements below must be complied with by all Contractors and Sub-Contractors working on premises or land which is under the Council's control.

2 DEFINITIONS

"Council"	Whitchurch Town Council
"Site"	Means any land or premises designated by the Council as a contract site, in a contract, with any Contractor and includes any access or egress to any such land or premises.
"Contractor"	Means any individual, partnership or corporation whose employees enter Council sites for the purpose of performing any work or services for the Council, and shall include agents and, or Sub-Contractors for such a Contractor.
"Council's Representative"	Means the Supervisory Officer for the Contract, Town Clerk, Manager, Safety Advisor or such other person as may be appointed by the Council.

3 MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

Before commencing Works, The Contractor will have carried out a suitable and sufficient assessment of:-

- (a) The risks of the Health and Safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst at work and
- (b) The risks to the Health and Safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking.

These shall be included in the Contractors Safety Policy, which shall be available for inspection at any reasonable time, and in any case it will be seen before works commence.

The Contractor will submit in writing to the Council, the name of their representative who will be responsible for co-ordinating safety activities at the start and during work on the site or premises.

- (a) The Contractor is responsible for all Sub-Contractors and their employees, and for all persons delivering materials or doing business with him on site.
- (b) Where risk cannot be eliminated a safe system of work must be in operation.
- (c) The area of work, siting of temporary buildings and storage areas for potentially hazardous substances must have been clearly defined.

The Contractor must make himself fully aware of:-

- (a) Emergency evacuation procedures and assembly points which may be in force.
- (b) The sharing or provision of sanitary, welfare, canteen and first aid facilities, which has been agreed.
- (c) Any necessary licences, permits or consents in connection with the work.
- (d) Structural Engineers have been consulted where excavations are required near buildings or additional weight is being placed on the structure.
- (e) Safe passage for pedestrians is to be maintained at all times.
- (f) The position of all public utilities which might endanger health and safety, have been identified and any necessary precautions taken.

4 PROVISION OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Equipment must be suitable, by design, construction or adaptation for the actual work it is provided to do. It should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and instructions.

5 MAINTENANCE

- (a) The Contractor shall ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.
- (b) Where any machinery has a maintenance log, the log must be kept up to date.

6 INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

- (a) The Contractor shall ensure that all persons who use work equipment have adequate health and safety information and where necessary, written instructions pertaining to the use of the work equipment. All persons using equipment must be competent and fully trained, where appropriate.
- (b) Equipment owned or provided by the Authority for its employees use, may not be used by the Contractor under any circumstances.

7 SCAFFOLDING

- (a) All scaffolding must be erected and conform to all relevant British Standards Codes of Practice.
- (b) The Contractor will be responsible for the statutory inspections of scaffolds and for the keeping of a register.

8 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE HEADGEAR WILL BE WORN AT ALL TIMES

Guardrails, toe boards and, or mesh guards must be in position at all times, to prevent the fall of persons or materials.

9 LADDERS

All ladders must be the correct length for the work being carried out. They must be in a sound condition and securely fixed at the correct angle. Under no circumstances must ladder work be undertaken from a working platform.

10 ROOF

Roof ladders or crawler boards must always be used for works on pitched roofs, and relevant Codes of Practices strictly adhered to.

A safe system of work is necessary before entry onto the roof.

11 CRANES, HOISTS, LIFTING APPLIANCES AND LIFTING GEAR

- (a) All equipment must be erected, examined, tested and used in accordance with statutory regulations, and the relevant certificates obtained. These shall be available for inspection before any work commences.
- (b) Persons operating cranes or lifting machines must be trained, competent, and have the necessary qualifications.
- (c) Safe working loads must be clearly marked on all equipment.

12 EXCAVATIONS

- (a) Before any excavation is commenced, the presence of any electrical cables, drains, sewers, pipes etc. must be ascertained and the necessary Health and Safety precautions to be taken agreed with the Council's Representative.
- (b) The requirements of the Construction (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1996 must be maintained at all times. Where there is a danger of personnel falling into excavations, these will be securely fenced around or along the edge. During the hours of darkness, or poor visibility, excavations will be lit by warning lamps approved by the Council.

13 DEMOLITION

- (a) All demolition work must be carried out in accordance with British Standard Code of Practice 94. Before work commences, written authority must be obtained that the structure to be demolished is free of utility services etc., and following an inspection, reference must be made to drawings to determine type of structure etc.
- (b) The site must be made secure at all times to prevent unauthorised access by members of the public.
- (c) Any potential nuisance that may arise from demolition work must be assessed before works commence.

14 ASBESTOS

- (a) Removal of asbestos must be strictly in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987 and any amended legislation in force.
- (b) The Council and the Health and Safety Executive must be informed if Blue Asbestos is found in any building.

15 ELECTRICITY

- (a) Contractors shall at all times comply with the Construction (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1996, The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and any other relevant statutory requirements in force.
- (b) In particular all Portable Tools must comply with Regulation 4 (2) of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 regarding P.A.T. testing and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, Regulation 4 regarding suitability
- (c) Wherever possible the voltage must be reduced to 110v or lower.

16 PRECAUTIONS AGAINST FIRE AND/OR EXPLOSIONS

- (a) Existing emergency exits and fire fighting equipment shall be kept free from obstruction at all times.
- (b) The storage and use of petroleum spirit and L.P.G. must comply with the relevant legislation.(Highly Flammable Liquids & Liquefied Petroleum Gases Regulations 1972)
- (c) "No Smoking" signs must be obeyed.
- (d) Any fire fighting equipment required shall be provided by the Contractor.

17 CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (C.O.S.H.H. Regulations 1999)

In accordance with the above, a written assessment of all work which is liable to expose workers to any substance which may be hazardous to health, must be completed before any works commence.

18 **REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS/DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES**

All accidents or dangerous occurrences affecting Contractors or Sub-Contractors employees shall be notified in accordance with accident reporting legislation effective at that time.

19 **SUB-CONTRACTORS**

The Contractor will provide the Council with a list of all Sub-Contractors under the contract and inform them of their duties regarding Health and Safety.

20 **NON-COMPLIANCE**

If at any time during the currency of the contract, the Contractor fails to comply with any safety procedure, then, the Council will order the Contractor to stop that operation until risks have been eliminated.

SECTION 10: CONTACT WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES & BIOLOGICAL RISKS

INTRODUCTION

Risk assessment is not only concerned with injuries but also the possibility of occupational ill-health. Health risks fall into four categories:

- Chemical (see Section 15 Hazardous Substances.)
- Physical e.g. Noise and vibration (see Section 5 Personal Safety)
- Psychological (see Section 6 Stress)
- Biological dealt with in **this SECTION.**

Biological hazards may be transported by several forms of agent including, fungi, moulds, bacteria and viruses. The nature of the Council's work means that the risk from such agents is very low but the more common hazards are outlined here partially to set out simple precautions and partially to dispel myths.

BLOOD BORNE VIRUSES (BBVs)

BBVs are viruses that some people carry in their blood and which may cause severe disease in certain people and few or no symptoms in others. The virus can spread to another person, whether the carrier of the virus is ill or not.

The main BBVs of concern are :-

- Hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus and hepatitis D virus, which all cause hepatitis, a disease of the liver;
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) which causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), affecting the immune system of the body.

It is very unlikely that you will become infected through everyday social contact with another worker who has a BBV. BBVs are mainly transmitted sexually or by direct exposure to infected blood or other body fluids contaminated with infected blood. In the workplace, direct exposure can happen through accidental contamination by a sharp instrument, such as a needle or broken glass. Infected blood may also spread through contamination of open wounds, skin abrasions, skin damaged due to a condition such as eczema, or through splashes to the eyes, nose or mouth.

If you are a first aider in the workplace, the risk of being infected with a BBV while carrying out your duties is small. There has been no recorded case of HIV or HBV being passed on during mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for example.

The following precautions can be taken to reduce the risk of infection :-

- Cover any cuts or grazes on your skin with a waterproof dressing;
- Wear suitable disposable gloves when dealing with blood or any other body fluids;
- Use suitable eye protection and a disposable plastic apron where splashing is possible;
- Use devices such as face shields when you give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, but only if you have been trained to use them;
- Wash your hands after each procedure.

It is not normally necessary for first aiders in the workplace to be immunised against HBV, unless the risk assessment indicates it is appropriate.

As a first aider, it is important to remember that you should not withhold treatment for fear of being infected with a BBV.

WEIL'S DISEASE (LEPTOSPIRAL JAUNDICE)

Leptospirosis infection is carried in its various forms by rats and in rat or cattle urine. The bacterial infection contaminates most rivers, streams, foul and storm water drainage systems and wet river banks. It is just possible that you could be exposed when using equipment in countryside locations.

The infection can be encountered in two forms. Weil's Disease and the Hardjo Form. Weil's Disease is a serious and sometimes fatal infection transmitted to humans by urine from infected rats.

The bacteria can enter the body through cuts and scratches, through the lining of the mouth, throat and eyes after contact from contaminated water.

Symptoms may appear from three to nineteen days after contact. Common early signs are :-

- A temperature;
- Similar symptoms to influenza with joint and muscle pain (particularly calf muscle);
- Jaundice and conjunctivitis may be present also.

Work Practices

- Open wounds and cuts must be adequately protected by waterproof dressings.
- Workers must wear suitable waterproof personal protective equipment when there is a risk of encountering contaminated material or substances.
- The equipment mentioned above will consist of overalls, gauntlets and safety footwear.
- Wash hands after handling any animal, contaminated water, clothing etc., especially before eating.
- If you suspect infection, contact your Doctor immediately, advise that your work may have exposed you to Leptospirosis and request a blood test to verify the disease.
- Leptospirosis is a notifiable disease under RIDDOR and must be reported to the enforcing authority as per Council policy.

Health Risks Associated with Dog Fouling (Toxicara)

As well as being unpleasant and unsightly, dog mess can contain the parasite which can cause blindness if swallowed. Although the parasite can be found in cats, its main host is the dog and its eggs, which can remain viable for up to two years are found in dog's faeces.

It may take weeks or months after swallowing these eggs for symptoms to develop which can last for a year or more and include one or more of the following – headache, fever, sore throat, aching limbs, abdominal pain, sleep disturbance, listlessness, pneumonia and asthma. Eye symptoms are not always present although blindness resulting from toxocariasis affects around 100 people a year and may develop 4-10 years after the initial infection. The main group of people at risk are children who play where irresponsible dog owners have allowed their dogs to foul without clearing it up afterwards. Fortunately, the disease can be controlled if the faeces are disposed of immediately in a responsible manner.

You cannot catch toxocariasis from an infected human being, only from the faeces of an infected animal – usually a dog.

Always wear gloves, cover up cuts and abrasions and wash hands thoroughly before eating.

Tetanus

Tetanus is a disease which affects the nervous system causing muscle spasms and rigidity. This can lead to respiratory failure and death.

The tetanus bacterium can be found in soil or manure and gets into the body through cuts or open wounds.

Wounds should be washed with a saline solution or clean water. Employees should visit their doctor for immunisation before starting work.

Legionnaires' Disease

A relatively uncommon form of pneumonia caused by a bacteria which however has a high fatality rate.

Legionella are found in standing water and soil and colonise plumbing systems and cooling towers. Human infection occurs when aerosols of contaminated water are created and inhaled. The Council will periodically assess the risk from its plumbing systems and carry out any necessary chlorination.

SECTION 11: WORKING OUTDOORS

There are hazards associated with all sorts of out door work which relate to extreme weather conditions.

- Suitable outdoor wind proof and waterproof reflective clothing must be worn in wet and cold weather to prevent hypothermia.
 - Skin cancer (melanoma) is caused by intensive exposure to the Ultra-Violet rays in sunlight. Shirts should be worn at all times and sunblock is available for protection of other body areas at times of high risk. Anyone with irregular shaped moles, bigger than 6 mm across and changing in shape should contact their doctor.
 - Snow and ice can make conditions underfoot slippery. Make sure your footwear has good grip. You may have to adjust the way you work to suit the conditions e.g. working slower or taking a different route.
 - Working in fog can be hazardous due to reduced visibility. Remember that the condition of your reflective clothing is important to your safety so that motorists see you.
-

SECTION 12: HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

The following training is provided for all permanent and casual employees of the Council.

INDUCTION TRAINING

A brief introduction to new recruits on the Council's Safety Policy and the main hazards they will encounter in their work.

BASIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

This is a short, half day course that provides a basic knowledge of health and safety in the workplace. This training is mandatory for all employees of the Council.

FIRST AID QUALIFICATIONS/RE-QUALIFICATION

This course is for nominated First-Aiders and is accredited by the HSE, providing employees with a full knowledge of first aid in the workplace and how to handle situations as they arise. This is usually a 3 day or or 2 days for re-assessment.

EMERGENCY FIRST AID

This is a short course providing employees with a simple knowledge of first aid and what to do if an emergency situation arises.

FIRE RISKS

An introductory course for all employees

FIRE WARDEN TRAINING

This course is to provide employees the skills to assist with fire prevention and emergency evacuation in the workplace.

MANUAL HANDLING TRAINING

The aim is to provide delegates with the skills to recognise and control the hazards associated with manual handling in the workplace and in accordance with the Manual Handling Regulations 1992.

CHILD & VULNERABLE PERSONS

An introduction to the subject for persons who may work supervise children or vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly.

WORKING AT HEIGHTS & USE OF LADDERS

Training for those who work at heights

OTHER SPECIALISED TRAINING

Where a special need is identified. This will include training by manufacturers on new equipment. This has included highway safety, mobile lifting equipment, PAT testing, use of chain saws, tool box training for one off jobs, handling stress and use of visual display screens.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION & LONE WORKING

Training Records are maintained in the Health & Safety Register

The Council will issue a monthly **tool box briefing** covering safety or health issues, just to keep important information in your mind.

SECTION 13: YOUNG PERSONS

INTRODUCTION

Young persons are often at extra risk because of their lack of experience or absence of awareness of potential risks because they are not fully matured. The Council has a special duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young persons who are between school leaving age and under 18, and school children who are on Work Experience.

The Council will undertake a special Risk Assessment for any Young person and will notify the results to their parent/guardian if aged 16 years or under.

The Manager will ensure that young persons:

- a. are aware of and understand the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Procedures;
- b. have received Induction Training;
- c. are aware of and understand the Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedure, Fire Escape Routes and Assembly Points;
- d. do not work on unguarded machinery;
- e. do not work on dangerous machines:
- f. receive adequate training for their work activity;
- g. do not work with or be exposed to hazardous chemicals
- h. do not carry out hazardous manual handling operations;
- i. do not carry out any work activity unless the risks to their health and safety have been considered and where there is a significant risk assessed and controlled.
- j. are provided with safety footwear, overalls and safety spectacles, where necessary.

SECTION 14: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Introduction

Hazardous substances can be found in many workplaces and contact with them may lead to a range of medical conditions such as dermatitis, asthma and infectious diseases.

Visitors and the general public may be at risk from hazardous substances as well as the people using them. Section 11 deals with biological agents.

Chemical agents come in various forms including:-

- Liquids e.g. cleaning fluids;
- Dust e.g. lead and asbestos;
- Gases e.g. carbon monoxide;
- Mists e.g. from spraying operations
- Fume e.g. from welding processes
- Vapours e.g. from solvents

Different chemicals present different risks:-

- Irritant-non corrosive, which can cause inflammation of the skin or lungs
- Corrosive- attack living tissue, normally by burning. It is usually a strong acid or alkali.
- Toxic- where the function of one or more organs is impeded. In other words a poison.
- Carcinogenic- substances known or suspected of giving rise to cancers.
- Harmful-describes a substance which if swallowed, inhaled or penetrates the skin may pose limited health risks

Any hazardous substance that has been purchased is required by law to carry a warning labels, the manufacturer of the hazardous substance must supply a Manufactures Safety Data Sheet with it, which gives more detailed information necessary for its safe use. Some manufacturers' websites also give access to Safety Data Sheets for their products.

Employers must assess the risks from hazardous substances and put in place suitable control measures which may include substitution for a less hazardous substance, preventing or controlling exposure, providing information instruction and training, and suitable personal protective equipment as a last resort.

Hazardous substances can enter the body by inhalation, ingestion or absorption through skin contact. The most effective way being inhalation and so exposure limits are set in terms of air concentration.

C.O.S.H.H. Regulations 2002

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 requires the employer to take the following steps regarding Hazardous substances.

1. Assess the risk to health arising from hazardous substances used or created in the workplace.
2. Decide what precautions are necessary.
3. Ensure that control measures are being used and maintained.
4. Monitor the exposure of employees to the substance if necessary.
5. Carry out Health Surveillance.
6. Prevent or adequately control Exposure.
7. Prepare plans and procedures to deal with emergencies.
8. Ensure employees are properly trained, informed and supervised.

In order to comply with the C.O.S.H.H. Regulations 2002 the Council and its employees must adopt the following procedure. Staff must :-

- not work with a hazardous substance unless they understand the risks of the work and follow the required precautions and control measures;
- not introduce hazardous substances without authorisation;
- tell their manager if they suffer ill effects (including irritation) due to work involving substance exposure.

There must be a specific risk assessment (COSHH assessment) for any activity that could expose anyone to a hazardous substance – including any infectious agent. The assessment must be carried out by a competent person and specify the risks of the activity.

Manufacturers or suppliers of these materials will provide instructions (product/material safety data sheet) on their safe use, and usually these precautions will be sufficient to ensure safety. Information and training should be provided as required, and any recommended protective equipment such as gloves or goggles made available and used.

Copies of all Data sheets are kept in the Health & Safety Register and copies will be provided to employees who use the chemicals.

SECTION 15: TRANSPORT & VEHICLES

Use of Council Vehicles

The Council pays a mileage rate for those who need to travel on Council business using their own vehicle or alternatively provides a Council vehicle when needed.

- Always familiarise yourself with the controls of an unfamiliar vehicle before driving off.
- Ensure your driving licence is valid and covers the class of vehicle you are to drive. The Council reserves the right to inspect documents.
- Do remember to carry out daily safety checks on tyres, brakes, lights and ensure windows & lights are clean. Check weekly, tyre pressure, oil & water levels.
- Always drive to the requirements of the Highway Code as the Council will not be responsible for driving offences.
- Allow sufficient time for journeys but remember it is not always possible to keep appointments on time, so do not take any unnecessary risks if you are delayed.
- Ensure any materials carried in the process of your duties are firmly secured to prevent movement.
- Do not carry liquids unless they are in a proper container. Always label containers with the name of the contents.
- It is a legal requirement to wear a seat belt at all times.
- You must ensure your vehicle is insured for business use. The Council reserves the right to inspect documents.

Use of Mobile Phones

Employees are required to abide by the law at all times while driving as part of their employment. The law regarding the use of mobile phones while is specific. It says:

- Any kind of distracting behaviour which causes the driver to drive without due care and attention can result in a charge of dangerous driving. This has always been the case.
- It is illegal to use a mobile phone while driving if the phone has to be picked up and held to be used.
- The legislation does not forbid the use of a proper hands free kit or blue tooth.
- Breaches of the new legislation will result in a fine to the driver which increases if the case goes to court.
- The legislation does not include the use of two-way radios.
- The legislation does not apply in situations of extreme emergency where it is not possible to stop safely and the call is one required to be made to the emergency services (999)
- The vehicle is only considered to be at rest if the engine is switched off.

The Council's Policy is that normal circumstances staff should not use a mobile phone while driving. A hands free kit will be provided for any car user or any person provided with a mobile phone on request and this should always be used when it is necessary to respond instantly to a call without pulling over and stopping the vehicle.

Calls to hands free users should be brief, to the point and not require complicated answers, to minimise the distraction factor. Drivers should not make calls while driving.

Work on the Highway

There are circumstances when safety precautions are necessary because work activities affect other motorists and could put employees or other members of the public at risk.

- All signing arrangements for roadworks will be in accordance with the recommendations contained in Document 12 "Safety at Street Works and Road Works".
- All vehicles will be equipped with rotating amber lights conforming with Regulation 28 of the Traffic Signs Regulations.
- All personnel working on the highway will wear high visibility clothing provided.
- The execution of works of any nature will be undertaken in such a way that hazards both to personnel and members of the public will be minimised.

Loading and Unloading on the Highway

Minor Roads

This is possible where they can be clearly seen by oncoming vehicles. The vehicle should be parked as close as possible to the kerb and, if in a hazardous area, the amber rotating light will be turned on. Unloading/loading will be carried out on the nearside where possible.

Major Roads

In these circumstances, staff will park as close as possible to the kerb, switch on a rotating amber light and wear high visibility clothing when loading/unloading (this should be done on the nearside). If, on a high speed road or near a corner or other obstruction, the vehicle will be coned off and the "keep right" sign 610 will also be put out in advance of the cones. (Five cones minimum)

The procedure will be that the driver and passenger will unload the cones and put up direction arrows **facing the traffic**. Place the cones starting from the edge of the kerb working into the carriageway, thus providing a safe working area to load and unload the vehicle from.

SECTION 16: GUIDE TO RISK MANAGEMENT

What's Risk Assessment All About?

The process of Risk Assessment is probably the single most important process for identifying hazards in the workplace and gaining commitment to eliminate or reduce those hazards.

A **hazard** is defined as “anything with the potential to cause harm”.

e.g. A trailing cable across a walkway is a trip hazard.

Risk is defined as “the likelihood of that particular hazard causing harm” and will depend on circumstances. e.g. The risk of someone tripping over a cable in a main walkway will be greater than in an isolated area.

A **control measure** is defined as “anything we do to eliminate or reduce the risk”.

e.g. Hanging up cables or instructing workers to keep a tidy workplace are control measures and some may be more effective than others.

These three words **hazard, risk** and **controls** are the building blocks of risk assessment. Risk Assessments are not just a good idea - they are required by law. Under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 any employer must make “a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of employees to which they are exposed while at work and also the risks to which others persons are exposed as a result of that employers undertaking.”

Although different employers may have different ways of tackling Risk Assessment all should follow the same basic steps :-

1. Identify the hazards;
2. Identify who is affected by each hazard;
3. Identify the level of Risk with each hazard;
4. Identify what controls are in place already;
5. Identify what additional controls are needed to reduce the Risk to an acceptable level.

Everyone goes through this process informally. For example when crossing the road or climbing a ladder a person will be running through the process mentally and adjusting their actions accordingly. But as activities or locations become more complex a more methodical and formal approach is needed.

Levels of Risk

Estimating the level of Risk associated with a particular hazard is an important part of any risk assessment process because it is necessary to establish which risks need action first.

Risk can be further split down and represented as the product of frequency x severity. For example taking the risk of motorway driving. The more frequent the journey the greater the risk, the severity or outcome of a motorway accident could be multiple fatalities.

The following Risk Rating system is to be used:-

SEVERITY	LOW (Minor Injury / Occupational Illness)	MEDIUM (Lost Time Injury/ Occupational Illness)	HIGH (Major Injury/ Occupational Illness)
LIKELIHOOD	1	2	3
LOW (Unlikely) 1	LOW	LOW	MEDIUM
MEDIUM (Even chance) 2	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
HIGH (Likely) 3	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH

e.g. A risk of medium severity with a high likelihood of happening will have a score of 2x3=6.

Methodology

- The Risk assessment will be carried out by an Advisor and an employee who, by experience or training has a sufficient knowledge of the work activity
- Risks will be re assessed annually or on a change of activity
- Risk assessments will be carried out on a Council Risk Assessment Form
- Risk assessments will normally be activity based but may be location based
- The Council will base its control measure improvements on the risk assessment priority

Specialised Risk Assessments

Additional risk assessments are required for separate pieces of legislation. Specific regulations e.g. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) state that the assessment must be made before commencement of the task involving the substance. The risk assessment provisions in the other are much more specific and generally require action to be taken under specific conditions. These regulations include :-

- Manual Handling Regulations 1992;
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER);
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992;
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992;
- Noise at Work Regulations 1989;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999;
- Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2003;
- Control of Lead at Work Regulations 1998.

Individual Risk Assessments must be made for each Young Person under the age of eighteen and also for pregnant women and nursing mothers.

One off tasks or events are likely to require a separate and specific risk assessment.

SECTION 17: THE MANAGEMENT OF ASBESTOS IN COUNCIL PREMISES

The Risks

- Asbestos is the collective term given to a group of naturally occurring fibrous silicate materials. It was used in the recent past to add strength to materials such as concrete and also because of its heat resistant and insulation properties.
- Breathing in asbestos fibres can lead to asbestos related diseases such as cancers of the lungs and chest lining.
- There is usually a long delay between first exposure to asbestos and the onset of disease (15 – 60 years)
- Many buildings in the U.K. contain asbestos in one form or another ranging from asbestos containing cement roof sheets at 10-15% asbestos, to pipe lagging at up to 85%.
- The Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) is not a risk if it is left undisturbed in good condition with sealed surfaces and edges. When the ACM is broken, crushed, drilled etc. dangerous fibres may be released and breathed in.
- There are three types of asbestos commonly found in buildings, “blue” or crocidolite, “brown” or amosite and “white “ or chrysotile. They are all dangerous but blue and brown are more hazardous than white.

Legislation

- The **Control of Asbestos at Work regulations 2002** impose certain duties on anyone who owns, occupies, manages, or has responsibility for non-domestic premises, which may contain asbestos.

- The above regulations also require that employers prevent exposure of employees to asbestos. If this is not reasonably practicable then exposure must be reduced to the lowest level possible.

The Council's Asbestos Safety Procedure deals with the following : -

- Buildings must be checked to see if asbestos is present;
- The condition of the asbestos must be ascertained;
- It must be assumed that the material contains asbestos unless strong evidence is produced that it does not;
- If any maintenance or refurbishment is to take place or the asbestos is in poor condition it should be identified by a specialist and marked.
- The location and condition of the asbestos must be recorded on a plan or drawing
- A decision must be made as to whether the condition or location means the material is likely to be disturbed.

Any jobs involving the handling or removal of ACM must be performed by a contractor licensed by HSE who is competent to deal safely with the risks involved. Asbestos waste must be disposed of in accordance with the 1996 Special Waste regulations which require it to be double bagged in heavy-duty polythene bags and clearly labelled with a prescribed label. It can only be sent for disposal to a licensed tip or site.

What to do if you discover asbestos

- Exclude all persons from the area and inform your line Manager.
- If you can do so without further risk to yourself and others damp down any broken or damaged ACM.
- Do Not handle or remove the ACM yourself.
- If you have control or responsibility for contractors make sure they are aware of the above procedure, and have received and understood the Council's **Asbestos Safety Procedure**.

SECTION 18: REGISTERS & RECORDS

The Council maintains a central Health and Safety Register which is kept by the Town Clerk and which contains the following:-

1. Notification of Occupation (OSR 1 Form)
2. Staff/Councillors Training Records
3. Safety Policy
4. Accident Records, Notifications & Reports
5. Lifting Plant & Equipment Inspection Certificates
6. Pressure Systems & Portable Gas Inspection Certificates
7. Permits to Work/ Safe Working Methods
8. Risk Assessment Records
9. Electrical equipment & circuit records
10. Noise Assessment Records & Audiometry Records
11. Record of eye tests & actions taken
12. Guidance & Codes of practice index
13. Record of Personal Protective Equipment
14. Contractors Guide & Records of Issue
15. Driver checks on vehicles
16. COSHH Assessment Records & Associated data
17. Fire Safety checks & procedure
18. First Aid checks
19. Record of Quarterly checks on hand tools, power wash, power tools,
20. Other Health & Safety checks-ladders & platforms

A file of Health and Safety Information is maintained in the General Office at the Civic and is available to all staff on the Laptop Computer.

SECTION 19: PERMITS TO WORK

INTRODUCTION

The Council will identify certain activities which are particularly high risk either because of the nature of the work or because employees are likely to be unfamiliar with/ not trained for the work.

No employees are allowed to undertake these activities without a written **Permit To Work** from their Manager. The Council will only issue Permits on the advice of its Safety Advisor who will first facilitate a Risk assessment and ensure that a Safe System of Work is put into place. The Council may decide that it will have such work carried out by a specialist contractor.

WORK REQUIRING A PERMIT

- Work in confined spaces
- Work with Asbestos based materials
- Roof Work
- Entry to roof-spaces with difficult access/egress
- Work on Mains Electrical Circuits
- Excavations below 1metre deep
- Any of the Council's premises being used as a Construction Site
- Ladders above 4m working height
- Use of a chain saw above ground, unless standing on a platform not exceeding 2 metres high.

SECTION 20: LITTER COLLECTION & STREET CLEANSING

Currently the Council's duties in this respect are minor, however its role is growing and the principles need to be applied even if supervising volunteers who work in the Clean Team.

On a general note, **all persons must wear hi-vis jackets or waistcoats and any other Personal Protective equipment provided at all times.** Personal hygiene should be observed by ensuring that hands are washed using the facilities on the vehicle or at the Council's premises before eating.

20.1 Driver Safety

- Specific responsibilities relating to vehicle maintenance and road-worthiness checks, documentation, and regulations pertaining to Driver's hours are detailed in the Council's "Drivers Operating Procedure" which must be followed by all Drivers.
- No vehicle is to be driven except by a qualified driver holding a licence for the class of vehicle to be driven.
- Look out always for other vehicles entering or leaving the premises - there may be visiting vehicles not anticipating any hazard.
- Vehicles must be driven in compliance with Traffic Acts and regulations. Park vehicles where they will not cause an obstruction to other traffic or members of the public.
- Hazard and warning lights, where fitted, must only be in operation while the vehicle is being loaded.
- At the disposal point, no crewmember except the driver should leave the cab, and vehicles must only be driven at safe speeds, following directions from the attendant. The site rules must be followed at all times.
- Do not leave the vehicle cab without ensuring that it is safe to do so, and that the vehicle is properly immobilised with hand brake on.
- Do not drive your vehicle if the condition makes it unsafe, but contact your manager immediately.
- Do not allow the vehicle cab to become littered or untidy, or used to transport miscellaneous items which could obstruct access to and from the cab.

- Do not allow your vehicle to operate with loads exceeding the maximum permissible carrying capacity.
- Ensure that your vehicle's first aid equipment is protected and maintained at all times, requests for first aid equipment via your Supervisor.

20.2 Loader Safety

- All travelling must be done only within the cab of the vehicle. At no time must you ride on the outside of a vehicle, or alight from a moving vehicle.
- On major roads, collections from both sides of the road at the same time should not (generally) be undertaken. Do not walk behind the vehicle without looking BOTH ways to check for passing traffic.
- Do not go onto any land where you do not have right of access or which appears unsafe for any reason. If in doubt contact your manager.
- Full bin bags are awkward to handle, particularly when wet, and special gloves are available from your Supervisor to assist you. Always attempt to lift loads in a relaxed manner, without holding the arm and body rigid. Beware of broken glass and tin lids sticking through the liner. Remember that plastic bags are a hazard to small children.
- Full plastic bags should be placed on the kerbside for the minimum period only and always sited so as not to obstruct pedestrians. Any spillages on collection must be cleared up.
- Exercise extreme care when collecting in adverse weather conditions such as rain, ice, snow and fog.
- Any damage to property must be reported to the Occupier and your manager.
- Take care when lifting loads onto the vehicle, and don't throw them whilst keeping the body rigid. Swing bags up and lower them in a smooth manner. Overweight bags should not be lifted.

20.3 Bulky Items

There is a risk of manual handling injuries from this activity, which can be reduced by following a few simple steps :-

- Make sure you have the correct P.P.E., gloves and safety shoes must have a good grip;
- Plan the job first-make sure you have assistance if required, if not tell your supervisor. Clear the route for trip and slip hazards, plan which way you will go up or down steps, try not to stand in a position so the load could fall on you if it slips. Look for sharp edges;
- Work within your own capabilities of lifting, (a very rough guide would place a weight limit of 25 kgm on a healthy male to be moved or carried at waist height);
- Use the lifting aids provided such as a sack truck, making sure the load is securely tied or strapped on;
- If you have to lift from the floor, always keep a straight back, get as close to the load as you can, use your leg muscles to lift and avoid twisting;
- When team lifting, choose one person to give signals, move smoothly and in unison.

20.4 Hazardous Waste

If the waste can be seen to contain any of the following it should not be handled without a specific risk assessment as it will be classed as hazardous waste and will require special disposal arrangements. Your supervisor should be informed: -

- **Mineral oils;**
- **Chemical waste;**
- **Asbestos;**
- **Car batteries.**

It is also possible that you may come into contact with the following biological hazards, see Section 10.

Used hypodermic needles should not be handled without needle proof gloves.

They can be picked up with a litter picker and put in a sharps container for disposal as clinical waste. "Sharps" is the term given to any sharp object such as glass or metal. The most serious of these injuries being needle stick injuries.

There is not just the harm caused by the injury itself to consider but also any infection which may be transmitted into the bloodstream. In extreme circumstances, this would be Hepatitis or HIV.

Always wear gloves. Ordinary gloves may offer some protection against a glancing sharps injury but only special **HYPODERMIC PROOF GLOVES** fully protect against needlestick injuries.

Handle bags or bin liners with care. Pick bags up by the neck and hold slightly away from the body. Never collect clinical waste unless you are authorised to do so.

You may have circumstances where you find used hypodermics unexpectedly. **NEVER handle them directly**, use a litter-picker and put them directly into a "sharps box" specially constructed for the purpose.

If you don't have the right equipment to handle them safely, cover them up with something heavy and send for help.

Remember that used hypodermics may not always be visible, do not dig or clean debris by hand, use a tool (rake, shovel etc.) first.

If you do suffer a needlestick injury, you should report it straight away to your supervisor. You will need a blood test to find out if any serious infection has been passed on. **Prompt medical attention is very important** following sharps injuries. Needlestick injuries must be treated with great importance.

SECTION 21: GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

The Town Council's role in this respect is currently minor, mainly as client to contractors, however the principles of safe operation need to be understood for monitoring purposes.

Pedestrian Operated Motor Mowers

- **Clothing**
When operating any machine, ensure you are wearing the appropriate protective clothing. Essential protection is safety footwear.
- **Pre-Start Checks**
Before using the machine, inspect for any damage or defects. Make sure fuel and oil levels are in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.
Check :-
 - a All guards correctly fitted to moving parts;
 - b No loose nuts or bolts;
 - c Cables are not frayed;
 - d Fuel cap fits correctly;
 - e No leaks - fuel, oil etc.
- **Defects**
Any defects must be reported to your supervisor immediately.
- **Starting**
When starting the engine, ensure you are the only person carrying out the operation. Make sure no one is tampering with the controls or standing or working in the near vicinity. Ensure that the gears or clutch are disengaged. If using a starting handle, care must be taken to keep thumb and forefinger together. Where possible, start the machine on level ground. Do not start engine in an enclosed area, i.e. tool shed or garage. **Follow manufacturers instructions to start the engine.**
- **Operation**
 - a Before starting to cut the grass, make sure the area is free from debris and other objects. Be aware of parked vehicles. Ensure animals and bystanders, particularly children, are a safe distance away.
 - b Know the whereabouts of your nearest first aid facility.

- c Take special care when working slopes or banks. Use footchains or similar to ensure you have a good foothold. If in doubt about safety or working on a slope or bank, seek advice of your supervisor

- **Refuelling**

- a Ensure the correct fuel, i.e. diesel, petrol, 2 stroke, is used.
- b A funnel or filler spout must be used with an appropriate fuel container for refuelling.
- c **Do not** refuel whilst the engine is running. **Do not** smoke whilst refuelling.

Be careful of spillage, especially when the engine is hot.

Use only approved fuel cans clearly marked showing the type of fuel.

- **Cleaning And/Or Adjustments**

All types of mower - when cleaning or making adjustments, disengage gears, switch off engine and isolate by removing the spark plug lead keeping it well clear of the spark plug.

- a Make all adjustments on level ground.
- b Clean the machine after use. Lubricate as necessary or in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.

- **Cylinder Motor Mowers**

Take additional care when cleaning the cylinder blades, where possible wear gloves. **Never clear cylinder whilst engine is running.**

Isolate engine by removing spark plug lead. Beware of latent energy in system when cleaning a jammed cylinder.

- **Rotary Motor Mowers**

- a Never rotate the cutter by hand without first isolating the engine. **Disconnect spark plug leads.**
- b Try to avoid walking backwards when using the machine, keep hand and feet well clear of the rotating blades.
- c When mowing banks and slopes be aware of flying stones and debris at head and shoulder height.

Hedge Trimmers/Cutters

Petrol Driven

These can be hazardous if misused and must only be operated by **persons who have received instructions on these machines.**

- **Clothes**

Essential protection is :-

- a Safety Boots;
- b Gloves;
- c Ear Defenders;
- d Mesh or Face Visor or Goggles.

- **Pre Start Checks**

Check :-

- a All switches and controls operate correctly;
- b No loose nuts and bolts;
- c Petrol cap fits correctly;
- d No leaks in fuel lines etc.

- **Defects**

Any defects must be reported to your Supervisor or chargehand immediately.

- **Starting**

Be familiar with the manufacturers' instructions. Do not start or run the engine inside a closed building. **Inhaling fumes is dangerous.** Never run the machine without the fuel cap being securely fitted. Only start the machine on a flat clear area of ground.

- **Operation**

Before operating the machine, check :-

- a Hedge for debris or other type of obstructions, metal fencing, etc.
- b Ensure the surround ground area is clear of obstacles.
- c That the area is clear of people, particularly children, and animals.

When working, keep hands and clothing well clear of the cutting blades. Switch off the engine and isolate by removing the spark plug lead before making adjustments, lubricating or clearing blockages and jammed blades. Do not leave the equipment unattended at any time. Use upward sweeps. Do not attempt to cut branches thicker than 10mm. If using stepladders, tower or trestles are used, ensure the handbrake is supplied and the wheels are locked. When two or more operators are working an area, plan out the area of working for each person. Ensure sufficient space is left between them. Before starting work, know the whereabouts of your nearest first aid facility and telephone.

- **Refuelling**
 - a Ensure the correct fuel grade is being used, i.e. 2 stroke.
 - b Engine must be switched off when refuelling.
 - c A funnel or filler spout must be used with an appropriate fuel container.
 - d Do not smoke whilst refuelling, be careful of spillage, especially when the engine is hot.

Use only approved fuel cans clearly marked showing the type of fuel.
- **Cleaning And Adjustments**

When cleaning or making adjustments, switch off engine, isolate by removing the spark plug lead keeping it well clear of the spark plug.

 - a Making all adjustments with the machine on level ground.
 - b Clean the machine after use.
 - c Lubricate as necessary in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Weed, Grass And Brush Cutters (eg. Strimmers)

These can be hazardous if misused.

- **Clothing**

When operating these machines, ensure you are wearing the appropriate protective clothing.

 - a Safety footwear.
 - b Face visor or goggles.
 - c Ear defenders.
 - d Gloves

Shorts are not to be worn.
- **Pre-Start Checks**
 - a lower cutting head;
 - b No loose nuts or bolts;
 - c Cables are not frayed or obstructed;
 - d Petrol cap fits correctly;
 - e No leaks;
 - f Controls operate correctly;
 - g Check the harness is in good working order.
- **Defects**

Any defects must be reported to your supervisor immediately.
- **Starting**

Be familiar with the manufacturers' instructions.
Do not start the machine or run the engine inside a closed building. **Inhaling fumes is dangerous.**
Never run the machine without the fuel cap being securely fitted.
Only start the machine on a flat clear area on the ground.
Never start the engine whilst strapped to the operator.
Do not attempt to start the engine in tall grass.
- **Operation**

Fit the harness and make the necessary adjustments so that the machine is balanced and the handlebars are in the correct position to suit the operator. Check the handlebars are tight.

 - a Clear working area of debris etc and allow plenty of working space. Be aware of parked vehicles. Ensure that animals and bystanders, particularly children, are a safe distance away.
 - b When working, always cut from right to left, tilting the machine slightly to the left.
 - c Do not throttle the engine.
 - d Never carry the machine with the engine running without being hooked up to the harness in the proper manner.
 - e Should the operator be assisted by another person, ensure that they work immediately behind the operator, leaving sufficient space should the operator turn towards them.
 - f When two or more operators are working an area, plan out the area of working for each person, leaving sufficient space between them, particularly when using metal blades.
 - g Before starting work, know the whereabouts of your nearest first aid facility and telephone.
- **Refuelling**

Never refuel the machine strapped to the operator.

 - a Ensure the correct fuel is being used.
 - b Engine must be switched off when refuelling.
 - c A funnel or filler spout must be used with an appropriate fuel container.
 - d Do not smoke whilst refuelling, be careful of spillage, especially if the engine is hot.

Only use fuel cans supplied.

- **Cleaning and/ or Adjustments**
When cleaning, or making adjustments, switch off engine, isolate by removing the spark plug lead keeping well clear of the spark plug.
 - a Make all adjustments on level ground.
 - b Clean machine after use. Lubricate as necessary in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions.
- **Tools And Materials**
 - a Keep cutting tools **sharp** and fitted with **guards** when in transit or storage.
 - b **Safety guards** must not be removed or modified and all power tools must comply with current safety regulations.
 - c **Knots** not in use should be **untied from the rope**.
 - d **Chemicals** of any type, including **petrol and oil** must be stored at all times in **correctly labelled, leakproof containers** away from personnel.
- **General**
 - a Employees must realise that there is a continuing need for improvements in methods of working and equipment. The man on the job is often ideally situated to record these developments and he should feel at liberty to discuss them with the management.
 - b At all times be careful, promote team spirit within your gang.

SECTION 22: SAFETY AT OUTDOOR EVENTS

It is the policy of the Council to ensure that all outdoor events organised by the Council or in partnership with other organisations are safe as possible.

With this in mind, Operating Procedure 143 Events Management and Operating Procedure 101 Safety, Events Emergency Procedure must be followed. The guidance below sets out some helpful tips.

Do:

- Check on public liability insurance for all traders booked for the events.
- If more than 250 people are expected at any one time, ensure the event is listed on the Special Events Insurance
- Ensure sufficient staff/volunteers are available to supervise the event
- Carry out a Risk Assessment for the event and plan for potential problems,
- Apply for any legal orders required – road closures, planning consents for structures, noise and nuisance implications, licences for entertainment, music.
- Draw up a plan for the day before and the day of the event and make sure everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Make sure the event has plenty of visible marshals, if required and that these are adequately briefed regarding their role of duty of care.
- Make sure that a clearly identifiable person is around who can make decisions – don't expect everything to go to plan.
- One Organisation, either the Town Council or a voluntary group must be identified as the lead organisation, who are responsible for coordinating all supervision and ensuring this Procedure and the actions identified in the Risk Assessment are carried out.
- Where deemed necessary, first aiders will be used, either from a recognised first aid organisation such as St John's Ambulance or from the Town Council staff. An emergency centre will be identified-the default position for the Town Centre will be the First Aid Room at the Town Hall
- The emergency action in the case of fire or other major emergency is set out as follows:
- Identify any special equipment such as rides, bouncy castles, laser displays or fireworks
- Identify potential electrical hazards

Emergency Procedure

- **On discovering a fire, or other major emergency, a Steward/Marshall will use the Bell provided as a warning device to gain people's attention or make an announcement over the PA system if**

available. Other Stewards will be advised and will cover the escape routes to guide people out in an orderly manner.

- Fire Extinguishers are positioned according to the nature of the event and Stewards will be advised of these positions in their briefing.
- Fire extinguishers are positioned primarily to assist your escape from the area. Only attempt to extinguish a fire if this can be done **without personal risk**. You must be confident how to operate an extinguisher safely and what type to use before you use it. **IF IN DOUBT, GET OUT.**
- Phone the Fire Service directly. (Dial 999) Try not to panic and give clear instructions as to the exact location of the outbreak. (Each Steward will have access to a mobile phone)

Evacuation Procedure on Hearing the Fire Alarm

N.B. Each Steward will be given a plan of the area marked with the main **Fire Escape Routes, Fire Bell Point** and location of **Fire Extinguishers**. Please familiarise yourself with this-Do not wait for a fire.

- Leave the area by the nearest escape route.
- Act quickly, but do not panic.
- Guide any members of the public, visitors participants during the evacuation and also ensure they leave by the nearest route. Pay particular attention to vulnerable people-children, disabled and the elderly
- Search your area to ensure everyone has left the area
- If the Fire Brigade or Police attend, follow their instructions and offer any assistance they ask for
- Do not allow people to return to the area unless you have instructions from the lead person or Fire Brigade that it is safe to do so.

Evacuation in the case of other Emergencies

- If there is a likelihood of danger to people in the area for whatever reason, the area must be evacuated.
- The normal fire alarm procedure will be used to warn people to leave, initiated by the most senior staff member present.
- The most senior person present will need to accompany the Police if necessary.

Accident or illness

- The nearest Accident and Emergency hospital is ??????????
- Stewards will be briefed on the location of the First Aid facilities and first aiders present

SECTION 23: WORKING AT HEIGHT & LADDER SAFETY

LADDERS

A third of all reported falls from height incidents involve ladders and stepladders, on average this accounts for **14 deaths** and **1200 major injuries** to workers each year. Ladders should be used as a last resort only, where possible mobile aluminium towers, scaffolds or podium steps should be considered.

- DO make sure the ladder is on firm level base
- DO tie all ladders using rope, footed until the ladders tied
- DO ensure the ladder is of a suitable length; 1.050m should project above the working platform.
- DO ensure that the ladder is at an **angle** of 75° from the **horizontal**, i.e. 4 to 1, one foot out at the base for every four feet high
- DO Inspect ladders before use for cracks, split stiles and damaged rungs, report any to your supervisor
- DO beware of any wet, muddy or icy rungs – Clean off foot wear.
- DO support both stiles by storing ladders on horizontal racks which eliminate sagging.
- DO store Timber ladders in **cool, dry** conditions.
- DO erect ladders against the trunk of a tree not against branches unless very substantial. Where ladders are moved from the trunk to a branch, there must be **at least 3 rungs above** the branch.
- DO ensure that extension ladders are less than 18 rungs per section with at least 2 rungs overlap.
- DO look out for power cables & other obstacles when erecting ladders
- DO always face the ladder.
- Do ensure both hands are free to hold the ladder during ascent and descent

- DO ensure the ladder is maintained
- DO beware of people below, you may drop something

- DON'T use painted ladders – this may conceal any defects
- DON'T use damaged or defective ladders e.g. cracks, missing rungs, signs of corrosion.
- DON'T use brick bands or tying wire to secure ladders
- DON'T attempt to move a ladder when standing on the rungs
- DON'T stand them on moveable objects e.g. pallets, bricks, lift trucks, scaffolds
- DON'T use the top three rungs of a ladder
- DON'T lash two ladders together to create a longer one
- DON'T use homemade ladders or anything else as a ladder e.g. shuttering or the side of a tower scaffold
- DON'T slide down the stiles
- DON'T carry load on a ladder use a hoist line
- DON'T cut down or alter the height of a ladder in anyway
- DON'T allow the unsupported part of the ladder to touch obstructions even when loaded with a man's weight.
- DON'T allow more than one person to climb on the ladder at one time
- DON'T over-reach when working from a ladder
- DON'T put steps by doorways where people may knock them over
- DON'T use steps in a way that applies side loading