

## Corporate Health & Safety Policy

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Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Director of Strategy and Support Services  
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## Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Council with an updated Health and Safety (H&S) Policy.

## Public Interest

2. The Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all its employees, Members and other persons who may be affected by the Council's activities. The Council's Health & Safety policy is concerned with meeting its statutory responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and sets out the aims, responsibilities and arrangement for achieving this.

## Recommendations

3. That Council:-
  - a Note the contents of the report;
  - b Approve the adoption of the updated Health and Safety Policy as detailed in Appendix A;
  - c Delegate the power to make any minor amendments to the Health and Safety Policy to the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning in consultation with the Director of Strategy and Support Services and the Portfolio Holder for Health and Safety.

## Background

4. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 imposes a statutory duty on employers to ensure so far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their employees whilst at work. The duty also extends to persons other than employees who may be affected by that work. Under the same law, employees have a statutory duty to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions at work. Under this Act, there is a legal requirement to keep a written record of their health & safety policy. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations explains the steps that must be taken to manage health and safety.



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5. The Council currently has a policy for managing health and safety that sets out its aims, responsibilities and arrangements, explaining who does what, when and how. However, it does not reflect the organisational changes post transformation and needed updating as it had not been reviewed recently. A review process commenced early in 2021 to bring this policy up to date. As part of this work, in April 2021, the Council appointed a health and safety consultant to support the development of this new policy, working in collaboration with both the Council's Health and Safety Steering Group and its Working Group to progress this.

### Health and Safety Policy

6. The appended revised health and safety policy reflects best practice that elected members have shared responsibility for health and safety, with the Leader having joint sign off with the head of paid staff. The method of reporting health and safety to the Leader would be through Audit Committee, as currently happens annually. Health and safety incidents are being monitored and reported to the H & S Working Group, Steering Group and at least quarterly to SLT.
7. The Unions have been consulted on the revised health and safety policy. The feedback has been reflected in the policy. The Unions were satisfied with the agreed minor amendments.
8. The Policy consists of the following sections:-

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|-----------|---|
| Section 1 | The statement sets out the aims for the Council and its overarching approach.   |
| Section 2 | This sets out the responsibilities.   |
| Section 3 | This sets out the organisational arrangements for managing health and safety.   |
| Section 4 | This refers to the service level arrangements that are in place across the different areas, as appropriately identified. A review and update of these separate policies are under development with representatives across the Leadership Management Team and these will later emerge as a set of reference links to separate documents. |
| Section 5 | The remainder of the policy explains the systems applied to achieve the aims of the statement.  |

9. The policy also sets out a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) identified for measuring the effectiveness of the arrangements in place and will be incorporated into the Performance report taken to District Executive each quarter.
10. The policy will be reviewed annually and whenever there is a change in signatories. Members are being asked to delegate the power to make any minor amendments to the Health and Safety Policy to the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning in consultation with the Director for Strategy and Support Services and the Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Housing.



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11. The policy will be communicated to the wider organization through Staff Awareness sessions, direct communications and will be available on the designated Policy Area for staff to review.

### **Financial Implications**

12. There are no new financial implications as a result of approving this policy.

### **Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers**

13. The policy has been formed incorporating the following legislation:
  - The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
  - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
  - Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977

### **Council Plan Implications**

This Policy is concerned with the safety and health of its employees and all those affected by the Council's activities and therefore works towards ensuring 'a modern, efficient and effective council that delivers for its communities'.

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

No notable implications.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

An equality impact relevance check was completed and is appended to this report. This check identified the policy has no negative impacts on staff, members, contractors or the public who share Protected Characteristics. In view of this, a full Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment is not required.

### **Privacy Impact Assessment**

No personal data is held within the Policy.

### **Background Papers**

None.