



## Health & Safety Policy

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## 1. Policy Statement

South Somerset District 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.

This statement demonstrates the commitment of the Senior Leadership Team to achieve high standards of health and safety and fulfil the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The Council intend to demonstrate continuing improvement in the management of health and safety.

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees.

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other parties is protected where they are affected by Council work activities e.g. the public, service users, residents, contractors and visitors.

The Council intends to apply best practice to the management of health and safety, and, as far as possible, the Council plans to be excellent in our health and safety performance in comparison with the sector. The Council will benchmark its performance in the sector with regular audits.

The Council wants its employees to benefit from their employment with us, and this means that we intend that their safety shall be ensured, and their health shall suffer no detriment, as a result of their work.

The Council will train, inform and supervise its employees to ensure that they are empowered to take responsibility for the safety of themselves and others. We will also consult our employees and work closely with them in the development of our policies and systems.

It is of keen concern to all of us that our operations in no way put the public and our service users at risk. Our policy statement on public safety explains this aim in more detail.

The Council will assess all the risks of its operations and seek to eliminate or reduce these risks where practicable. We will put systems in place for the management of remaining significant risks and apply these suitably with documentation and training. We will monitor to ensure our systems are suitable and properly followed, and review on an annual programme.

The Council will review its corporate health and safety management system, including the way in which its activities are managed and organised by senior management. The Council acknowledges the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 which clarifies the criminal liabilities of companies where serious failures in the management of health and safety result in a fatality.

The remainder of this policy explains the systems we will apply to achieve the aims of this statement. The policy will be reviewed annually and whenever there is a change in signatories.

.....  
Chief Executive Officer

.....  
Leader of the Council

Date.....

Date.....

## **2. Responsibilities**

### **2.1 Council Leader**

- Will take responsibility for the health and safety of the Council in respect of employees and others affected by the Council's work
- Will sign this policy annually

### **2.2 Council Portfolio Holder for Health and Safety**

- Will ensure that all Council decision making covers the health and safety implications of each option
- Will bring to Council attention any serious accident or enforcement action

### **2.3 Elected members**

- Will adequately resource the health and safety requirements of the Council in terms of finance, personnel and time
- Will devote time at one meeting a year of the Audit Committee to considering the Council's Health and Safety Performance Review
- Will work with concern for their own health and safety and that of others whilst carrying out their activities
- Will report all accidents and incidents in which they are involved, however minor
- Will report any near misses or hazards of which they become aware
- Will attend all health and safety training offered and put it into practice

### **2.4 Chief Executive Officer**

- Will take full and final delegated responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of the Council in respect of employees and others affected by the Council's work
- Will sign this policy annually

### **2.5 Support Services and Strategy Director**

- Will ensure that all Senior Leadership Team decision making covers the health and safety implications of each option
- Will chair the Steering Group
- Will present the Health and Safety Performance Review to the Senior Leadership Team

### **2.6 Senior Leadership Team**

- Will take reports from the Steering Group
- Will consider the Health and Safety Performance Review at meetings quarterly
- Will approve this policy and lead on its implementation
- Will ensure that the safety management systems described in this policy are implemented in full across the Council
- Will resource the health and safety requirements of the Council

### **2.7 Steering Group**

The Steering Group is the executive group for health and safety within the Council, which collectively determines and applies the safety management systems of the Council. It reports directly to the Senior Leadership Team, and is chaired by the Support Services and Strategy Director. See Appendix for full Terms of Reference.

### **2.8 Working Group**

The Working Group serves a consultative function, and also carries out much of the underpinning health and safety work of the Council, supporting the development and

assures delivery of SSDC's H&S Policy at the operational level. Its members review safety inspections, accident investigations and risk assessments. It is chaired by a member of the Steering Group and reports directly to the Steering Group. See Appendix for Terms of Reference.

## **2.9 Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning**

- Will have responsibility for liaising with the Competent Person for the Council
- Will write the quarterly Health and Safety Performance Review with input from the Steering Group
- Will arrange the annual Health and Safety Audit
- Will make any reports required under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

## **2.10 Competent Person**

- Will advise the Council's management on all aspects of health and safety
- Will ensure that all health and safety documentation and systems are legally compliant and suitable
- Will support specialists within the Council with the details of their role
- Will advise on legal matters; notably, RIDDOR reporting

## **2.11 Lead Specialists, People Managers, Managers and Specialists**

- Will implement the policy in the areas under their control
- Will ensure their staff are suitably trained and records kept
- Will carry out and review the risk assessments to cover the jobs, tasks and activities undertaken by their teams
- Will produce safe systems of work for tasks as required
- Will investigate all accidents and incidents reported by their teams and adjust relevant risk assessments as necessary
- Will arrange or provide first day induction for new starters
- Will carry out or ensure the carrying out of COSHH assessments for substances held or used by their team
- Will manage any lone working risk
- Will carry out the training analysis for their direct reports and volunteers to identify required health and safety training for the specific work or role
- Will arrange all the relevant health and safety training, liaising with the Learning and Development specialist as appropriate
- Will record all training delivered, and maintain training records for their teams
- Will arrange refresher training at the required intervals
- Will hold the Approved list of contractors for their areas.

## **2.12 Facilities Management Specialist**

- Will hold the asbestos register for all premises
- Will hold the property safety compliance documentation for each premises
- Will hold the relevant risk assessments including fire for each premises
- Will arrange for any necessary remedial actions, and will also arrange for reassessments or re-inspections as they become due

## **2.13 Digital Services**

- Will provide and support Health and Safety Technology solutions

## **2.14 Specialist – Learning and Development**

- Will set out corporate expectations for new starters, including health and safety, through an induction framework
- Will maintain an SSDC training standards framework which includes elements of health and safety training
- Will arrange required health and safety training on request from operational managers and team leaders

## **2.15 Specialist – People**

- Will liaise with the Occupational Health provider
- Will ensure that details of accidents, incidents and work related health problems are maintained on individual's personal files

## **2.16 Team leaders**

- Will ensure that their team are familiar with the risk assessments and safe systems covering their work
- Will supervise to make sure that the safe systems are adhered to in practice
- Will encourage the reporting of any accident, incident, near miss or hazard
- Will monitor their team to ensure their well being

## **2.17 All Staff**

(This category includes every employee, whether they have additional responsibilities or not, also agency and temporary staff and volunteers)

- Will report all accidents and incidents in which they are involved, however minor
- Will report any near misses or hazards of which they become aware
- Will be familiar with the risk assessments and safe systems covering their work and work in accordance with them
- Will check and take note of the COSHH information on any substance they use at work
- Will work alone only on low risk work with the approval of their line manager
- Will participate in the risk assessment process, the safety inspections, and any accident investigations that involve them
- Will work with concern for their own health and safety and that of others
- Will attend all health and safety training offered and put it into practice in their work

## **2.18 Health and Safety Co-ordinator**

- Will hold the master copies of the policies and guidance notes and issue them as required
- Will control access to the risk assessments and safe systems database
- Will flag up actions not complete or risk assessment in need of review
- Will control access to the accident and incident reporting and investigation database
- Will pass reports to the relevant manager for investigation
- Will monitor reported accidents and incidents with resulting absence and flag up to the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning a need for a RIDDOR report
- Will flag up any actions found necessary as a result of accident investigation which have not been completed
- Will produce data and analysis for monitoring and reporting purposes
- Will control access to the COSHH database
- Will upload data sheets and completed COSHH assessments

- Will flag up when COSHH assessments require review or when actions found necessary are not complete
- Will produce reports of accidents/incidents, near misses and hazards and pass these to the Working Group
- Will gather the information needed to process performance on the KPIs and pass it to the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning
- Will support the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning in regulating, administering and auditing the management system, and in liaising with the Competent Person
- Will coordinate the H&S working group and steering group
- Will coordinate the lone working personal safety device system
- Will flag up training issues identified through the working group and coordinate with the Specialist Learning and Development manager/People team to ensure appropriate training is coordinated

### **2.19 Senior First Aider**

- Is the Appointed Person for first aid at the Council
- Ensures that all first aid kits are checked and the checks recorded
- Orders required first aid supplies
- Makes sure that first aid is always available when staff are working
- Posts signs to identify the first aiders
- Ensures that first aid given is recorded on the accident form
- Monitors first aid training
- Will ensure that first aid risk assessments are carried out for the Council



### **3. Organisation**

#### **3.1 Health and Safety Leadership**

The Elected Members, particularly the Leader, take responsibility for the safe working of the Council, and therefore for any mishap which could befall staff or the public as a result of the actions or inactions of the Council. The Leader is a signatory to this policy.

A Councillor is appointed as portfolio holder for health and safety, and has a duty to act as the conscience of the Council in respect of health and safety. This Councillor will challenge any decision making which has not fully evaluated the risks of all options. They will also bring to the attention of the other Councillors any serious or significant accident.

The Audit Committee will consider the health and safety performance of the Council annually at their meeting which covers health and safety. In particular, the Health and Safety Performance Review will be tabled and considered by the Committee.

In practice, the Councillors delegate the implementation of the policy, and the application of the safety management systems, to their Chief Executive Officer.

The Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the rest of the Senior Leadership Team, is primarily responsible for ensuring that a suitable policy and safety management systems are in place, and that these are implemented in full across the Council. The Senior Leadership Team leads on the health and safety effort and resources the work requires. The Chief Executive Officer is a signatory to the policy.

The Support Services and Strategy Director is the nominated Director with particular interest in health and safety at the Council. They chair the Steering Group. They also present the Health and Safety Performance Review to the Senior Leadership Team quarterly. They ensure that health and safety is a prime consideration in the decision making of the Senior Leadership Team.

The Senior Leadership Team have appointed the Steering Group to lead the organisation on health and safety matters. The Steering Group reports to the Senior Leadership Team.

#### **3.2 Committee and Group Structures**

The Audit Committee has top level oversight of health and safety at the Council. They delegate responsibility to the Steering Group for developing policies and systems, and for the regular management of health and safety matters. The Steering Group is made up of lead specialists/managers representing all service areas of the Council.

The health and safety Working Group is the consultative group on health and safety for the Council and is made up of a cross section of interested individuals from across all areas. It reports to the Steering Group.

#### **3.3 Steering Group**

The Steering Group is chaired by the Support Services and Strategy Director. Annually, the Steering Group commissions an audit and receives the resulting report, revises the policy and puts forward the report to the Senior Leadership team and the Audit Committee. The Steering Group agrees the Key Performance Indicators for use for the following year.

The Chair of the Working Group also attends the Steering Group and feeds back.

The Steering Group meets quarterly. See appendix for Steering Group Terms of Reference.

### **3.4 Working Group**

The Working Group is chaired by the Specialist Service Manager.

The Working Group acts as a consultative forum in which proposals made by the Steering Group can be shared with the wider staff group. The Working Group also originates and carries out projects as required. They have a voice in all decision making. The members of the Working Group are representing their staff team, teams and Union members.

The Working Group meets quarterly. See appendix for Working Group Terms of Reference.

### **3.5 Health and Safety Documentation and Administration**

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator holds the master copies of the policy and guidance notes. They also control access to the database of risk assessments and safe systems of work. They control access to the accident/incident database, and also manage the flow of information via the near miss and hazard reporting system.

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator has the duty of flagging up when policies, risk assessments and safe systems of work require review, and when accident investigation is not completed.

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator collects the information from which the Key Performance Indicators are calculated quarterly and provides it to the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning.

### **3.6 Consultation and Communication with Employees**

Consultation with employees is largely managed via the Working Group. A Working Group representative is appointed to represent every team and group of workers and Union members. The representative will make themselves available to their group, and will carry forward to meetings any concerns or comments which have not been resolved locally. The representative will also have an involvement in the dissemination of information about new policies and practices, but this is largely managed at organisational level. There is extensive use of the intranet for the communication of health and safety information. As not all employees have access to computers, briefings and the dissemination of written information is used at the base where out of office workers are situated. Consultation with employees, or their representatives, on health and safety matters applies according to the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

### **3.7 Competent Person**

The Competent person role for the Council is fulfilled by an external Health and Safety consultant, who works in close conjunction with Council personnel to understand and integrate with the Council management. The Competent Person is a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. The Competent person provides advice to management at all levels on request, and monitors the general compliance of the Council.

### **3.8 Key Performance Indicators**

Key Performance Indicators are set for each year by the Steering Group and signed off as part of the policy review. These KPIs are established to provide meaningful measures of the organisation's health and safety performance, with an emphasis on proactive rather than reactive measures. A small number of KPIs are chosen, and these are logged and measured day to day by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. The KPIs for the current

year are contained in an appendix to this policy. KPIs are reported on to the Steering Group quarterly. See Appendix 5

### **3.9 Health and Safety Performance Review**

The Health and Safety Performance Review is a brief report which is drawn up annually and quarterly. It contains the annual performance against KPIs as well as accident and incident statistics and audit findings. This report is drawn up by the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning in conjunction with the Steering Group and goes to the Senior Leadership Team and the Audit Committee.

### **3.10 Risk Assessment**

Risk assessments are carried out by team leaders and managers to cover any task or activity where there is a significant risk. The risk assessment template is available on the risk assessment database. This database holds all the Council's risk assessments, and flags up risk assessments where actions are needed, and risk assessments which are due for review. Risk assessments uploaded onto the system are reviewed and initialled by the appropriate Manager. This declares that the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient, and that it is approved for action by the organisation.

Risks, which are significant, are those that are not trivial in nature and are capable of creating a real risk to health and safety which any reasonable person would appreciate and would take steps to guard against. Any queries can be clarified with the H&S coordinator, as appropriate.

### **3.11 Safe Systems of Work**

Safe systems of work are produced where the risk assessment raises a need. This will always be the case where behavioural controls on risk are prescribed. The safe systems of work are also recorded on the database, and approved by the Lead Specialist in the same way as the risk assessments above. The safe systems of work are also sent to every worker who carries out the task or activity concerned, and are gone through at induction with new starters.

### **3.12 Permit Systems**

Permit systems are needed for risks which are high, and cannot be fully controlled by the risk assessment controls alone. Examples of situation where permits are required include: hot work, work on or near live electrical systems, entry to confined spaces and access to an unguarded roof or any other unprotected place of work at height. Permits are issued by the relevant manager and held by the individual or team leader for the people doing the work. The permit will state all the precautions to be followed. It is valid for a limited period, and must be signed off by the issuing manager at the end of the allocated time period.

### **3.13 Control of substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH & DSEAR)**

Hazardous substances require COSHH assessment. Flammable and explosive substances require control under Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR). The policy of the Council is that flammable and explosive substances shall not be held or used by Council employees or on Council premises with certain tightly controlled exceptions. See DSEAR assessment.

The COSHH register is held online. A bank of datasheets and COSHH assessments is accessible from the Register, which also contains abbreviated risk information for each substances. Again, the Council's policy is that toxic and carcinogenic substances will not be held or used, with limited exceptions.

The use of pesticides is subject to further controls. Special training is required for users, together with designated storage equipment and protective clothing.

### **3.14 Training**

*Overall Policy and Objectives:*

All employees, no matter at what level they are within an organisation, must be competent to undertake their tasks. One method of achieving competency is through the provision of adequate and appropriate training. The Training Matrix captures the core, corporate principles and expected corporate standards for Training and Development by job family across SSDC. On that basis it provides a training framework that can be used dynamically: in establishing and maintaining training standards for job families at an SSDC level, these can then be cascaded to specific job roles and work areas.

This is achieved by matching each role within the council to the expected qualifications and training requirements for that position, as determined by the recruiting manager. Assessment of these requirements is the responsibility of the recruiting manager on a case by case basis; according to the demands and context of work to be delivered.

Training and development records should be maintained by the manager and reviewed regularly; ensuring staff competencies are the fit for purpose and cover the scope of expected work. It is also the manager's responsibility to ensure compliance to all and any legal requirements of each role. This is supplemented by Risk and Method statements for operations that define training and qualification requirements, where applicable.

*Implementation of Training:*

Managers have responsibility for identifying training needs for members of their team, with staff encouraged to play an active role in their own professional development. The manager must approve individual training requests and ensure these requests are aligned to the corporate standards captured in the Training Matrix.

When a training requirement is identified, by an employee or manager, the Self-Assessment form should be completed with the Needs Analysis Guide also utilised. The manager should review, approve and forward the request to the L&D Specialist for further approval and processing.

### **3.15 Monitoring**

The Council arranges for a full health and safety audit to be carried out annually, to assess the adequacy of policies and systems, and the adherence to them in practice. This audit is arranged by the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning on behalf of the Senior Leadership Team. The audit is usually arranged to be complete before the start of the policy review period, in order that its findings can be taken into account. A summary of the audit findings goes to the Senior Leadership team and the Audit Committee as part of the Health and Safety Performance Review.

Safety inspections for each premises and work area are carried out quarterly. These are done by a nominated person from each area, often a member of the Working Group. A checklist for the purpose is held electronically, and completed on a phone or similar device. The completed safety inspection is passed to the manager responsible for the premises or area for remedial action if required and signature. This person will hold the checklists on file.

The premises manager, or person in charge of the work area, will check each part of the area every morning for general and fire safety. In particular, they will walk all fire escape routes and operate fire exits. No record is made of these checks.

The fire marshal for a premises or area will complete the fire checks weekly. These are recorded in the fire log book, and include the testing of the fire alarm.

### **3.16 Accidents and Incidents**

Reporting is required of every accident and incident, however minor. Reporting is electronic, via the accident and incident Microsoft form, which is managed by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Send an email to the H&S email address with details of the accident or incident if you have any difficulty in using the database.

An accident or incident form is for when a physical injury is sustained or for any incidents involving violence and aggression. A near miss form is for an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness or damage – but had the potential to do so. This will include near misses involving either employees or non-employees.

Once an accident or incident is reported, the form thus initiated is sent to that person's line manager for completion of the investigation section. The actions recommended as a result of the investigation are overseen by the Working Group, and are signed off when complete.

RIDDOR reporting is initiated in the first instance by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator, who will identify any major injury, or absence following an injury by their monitoring of the accident incident form database. The Health and Safety Co-ordinator will send the information about the accident to the Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning, who will confirm that it is reportable and make the report on behalf of the Council.

### **3.17 Near Miss and Hazard Reporting**

The reporting of near misses and observed hazards is strongly encouraged. A near miss could be classified as something that has happened in the workplace unexpectedly, which hasn't caused any personal injury, but may or may not have caused damage, and that warrants reporting. It is deliberately made as quick and simple as possible. A report can be made by completing the Near Miss Microsoft form, which is managed by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. This information will be routed to the appropriate area of responsibility for resolution. The Working Group will monitor progress.

### **3.18 First Aid**

Anyone requiring first aid can identify a first aider from the signs posted in every staff kitchen. The names and photographs of nearby first aiders are posted. These individuals will have a first aid kit to hand, and will be able to attend to minor injuries or ill health, and obtain further help if required.

The senior first aider is the Appointed person for first aid at the Council. They will ensure that first aid kits are checked and there is always first aid available. The People team arrange first aid training, but the senior first aider will prompt if necessary.

At premises open to the public, first aid is routinely made available to members of the public requiring it. Any accidents or incidents affecting members of the public must be reported on the accident incident database in the same way as accidents to staff. The first aider must initiate these reports.

All first aid given must be briefly recorded, usually with the accident report.

### **3.19 Control of Contractors**

Contractors carry out some of the work of the Council. This is still part of the work of the Council, and the Council can outsource the work, but not the responsibility for having it done safely. It is therefore necessary to manage contractors closely, and to ensure their competence and capability in the management of the risks of their work.

This is primarily achieved by asking all contractors working for the Council to accredit with one of the SSiP schemes, such as CHAS or SafeContractor. The Council maintains an Approved List of contractors, and for admission to the list, the contractor must provide their certification from one of these schemes. In addition, the contractor will have to give evidence of insurance, and membership of trade bodies, and, if new to the Council, provide at least two satisfactory references from previous clients.

The Approved List is held and managed by the relevant team. Every contractor on the list is rechecked annually. Information from any member of staff about contractor behaviour and performance can be fed back to the overarching management for adding to the Approved List.

### **3.20 Asbestos**

Any building for which the Council is responsible which was built before 2000 must have an asbestos register. This register must be made available to any contractor or other person who is planning to work on the building. The register lists the known occurrences of asbestos containing material in the building, and also allocates them a risk rating. The information in the register should be shared with contractors in advance, so that arrangements can be made properly if there is any foreseeable likelihood of them disturbing asbestos. The Facilities Management Specialist maintains the asbestos registers and keeps them up to date with regular re-inspections as required. The Registers are available via the Property Services Portal.

At the same time as the register is issued to those planning work on the building, they must be reminded that despite our best efforts, there is always a risk of further unidentified asbestos being present, and they must be alert to encountering it.

### **3.21 Premises Risks**

The Facilities Management Specialist maintains the records for all premises owned or managed by the Council. Amongst those records there must be:

- A current Condition Survey for the wiring with a satisfactory outcome
- A current Gas safety Inspection or Landlord's Gas Safety Record
- A current safety inspection for any oil fired appliances
- A legionella or water hygiene risk assessment
- Insurance examination reports for any passenger lifts or pressure systems
- A fire risk assessment and accompanying records eg fire alarm, emergency light servicing etc

All these documents must be in date, with all recommendations complete or underway.

### **3.22 Fire and Emergencies**

The manager in charge of every premises or work area must have considered the risk of fire and other emergencies. A fire evacuation plan must be in place and known to all those in the premises. This must include:

- A means of raising the alarm
- Awareness of the alarm or signal by all those present
- Guidance and equipment for fighting fire
- Instruction on calling the fire service
- Instruction on leaving the building and safe routes of escape
- An assembly point
- Looking after the public
- Consideration of those with disabilities Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPs)

The fire evacuation plan must be in writing, and on display. Fire action notices should also be posted.

If a plan is needed for other emergencies, this may be based on the fire plan. Consider flood, bomb threat, power cut or terrorist incident.

### **3.23 Lone Working**

Whenever a task or activity may be undertaken alone, this should be identified and assessed in the relevant risk assessment. Control on risk are required, and these must include systems to ensure that a colleague knows the whereabouts of a staff member at all times. It is also important that there is a system to ensure that the staff member has finished work safely and gone home.

Not every individual should carry out the more risky lone working. Any health or personal reason why lone working should not be permitted should be identified at the recruitment stage or by way of routine health surveillance. This restriction must be clearly communicated to the line manager of the individual.

Some work should never be done alone. This includes work at heights, work with dangerous machinery, work with large animals and anything for which a permit is issued. See lone working policy.

### **3.24 Personal Safety**

Like employees of any public facing organisation, there is a risk of employees and contractors encountering challenging behaviour from the public. Although physical violence is rare, verbal attacks are not, and can cause great distress. It is important that the line manager for any public facing team is aware of problems affecting their staff, and has systems in place to ensure that no individual becomes overwhelmed.

Managers / team leaders should identify where it may be appropriate for personal safety device(s) to be provided and specific awareness training as appropriate.

Training is available to support staff in dealing with challenging behaviour, and will help to provide strategies that work.

The Council keeps a record of people who have a history of violent or aggressive behaviour towards Council employees but this is not held centrally and is maintained by managers of the relevant services.

### **3.25 Infectious Disease Prevention & Pandemic Management**

(Including but not limited to COVID 19)

The Council strongly encourages that employees follow Government and NHS advice with regard to all potentially infectious diseases or matters relating to public health. The health and safety, both mental and physical, of our employees remains a priority.

This is applicable to all employees, councillors, visitors, contractors, tenants and other persons who enter premises occupied by SSDC.

Where it is necessary, the Council will release guidance of measures by way of changes to procedures and/or working practices to prevent the spread of disease.

Concerning the current COVID-19 pandemic, employees are asked to familiarise themselves with and to follow [Government Guidance](#) with regards to restrictions, social distancing and self-isolation and advice on infection control from the NHS and other public bodies.

The [COVID-19 FAQs](#) are available on the portal and answer questions around leave, self-isolation and sickness. Employees who attend Council premises should follow the

guidance set out in the [COVID-19 workplace guidance](#) or any location-specific guidance, which can be obtained by the relevant member of the LMT.

If employees have any questions they should contact their line manager in the first instance.

### **3.26 Agile Working (Including working from home)**

The SSDC has adopted [agile working principles](#) to facilitate flexibility. Some of the [agile work methods](#) can include home working or working remotely (where the employee's location is not an SSDC premises).

Regardless of where they work, employee's health and safety, both mental and physical, is a priority to SSDC. Managers and employees need to work together to ensure that those who work remotely receive the same health and safety provisions as any other employee.

Managers should ensure that:

- employees complete and regularly update the home working self-assessment checklist
- have access to wellbeing support
- keep in touch and have regular and meaningful one to one meetings
- recognise and act upon the signs of signs of stress
- undertake the appropriate risk assessments
- ensure that employees complete and regularly update their DSE workplace assessment
- source any DSE equipment required
- ensuring that any accidents or ill-health directly related to working from home arrangements are reported in the usual way.
- read the [HSE guidance](#) on protecting home workers for more information.

Employees also have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety at work, whether that is at home or elsewhere. They should:

- keep in regular contact with their manager
- tell their manager about any physical or mental health and safety risks or any working arrangements that may need reviewing
- familiarise themselves with guidance from the HSE on [First Aid](#) whilst working remotely. This [Infographic](#) may be useful for other health and safety considerations whilst working from home.

### **3.27 Statement on Public Safety**

The Council has a duty of care not only to its own staff but also to the public who use its facilities, building and public spaces. The Council provides a range of different operations across South Somerset and is concerned to ensure that all its interactions with the public are neutral or positive for the people concerned.

The Council carries out proper risk assessments and safe practices of work at each site. The Council follows the guidance for good practice from the [Institute of Directors and the Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) in order to meet its legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The Council will:

- Provide premises for public use, which are physically safe, clean and welcoming. These premises will be well signed, accessible, and controlled.
- Warn the public, by means of signs, of risks which are not otherwise fully apparent
- Fit the services given to the public to the individual as far as possible



- Treat each member of the public with respect and courtesy
- Protect the public from risks which are under the Council's control
- Ensure that third party providers of Council Services to the public for example Leisure facilities actively have their own site specific health and safety practices in place.

Any accident affecting a member of the public which results or might have resulted from any action or inaction of the council is to be recorded on the accident incident database.

### **3.28 Equalities**

In accordance with health and safety best practice, this policy and the systems it describes will be interpreted such as to meet the health and safety requirements of individuals, with due regard to their needs and vulnerabilities. This interpretation takes place at the point of use of the systems, where a manager carries out a risk assessment or applies a safe system of work to an individual.

### **3.29 Occupational Health**

The Council accesses an Occupational Health service which includes;

- Pre-employment health screening
- Providing specialist guidance for managers on health conditions and absence
- Health surveillance
- Audiometric testing

The Council also provides an Employee Assistance programme, which is available for use by any employee. This also provides:

- Counselling
- Drug and alcohol advice
- Health promotion initiatives, amongst many other physical, mental and financial related support

#### **4. Arrangements**

The Arrangements section of the policy explains how the risks of the organisation shall be managed in practice, applying the systems from the previous section. It can take a number of different forms.

The recommendation in this case is that the Policy Arrangements should take the form of a series of brief policies and Guidance Notes, one for each of the Council's teams, and written by the people concerned. The more risk a particular team is exposed to, the more detail will be required in the Guidance Note.

The Guidance Note should succeed in explaining the safe ways of working in place to a reader with no previous knowledge.

The Policy Arrangements are held locally within the teams.

## 5. Appendices

### 5.1 Risk Assessment Template

Task/Activity:		Date:	Client:	Assessor:		
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?	Action by whom?	Action by when?	Done

**5.2 Health & Safety Steering Group – Terms of Reference**

**Purpose.** The purpose of the Health and Safety Steering Group (H&SSG) is to support the development and delivery of SSDC’s H&S Policy at the strategic level.

To discharge this remit it will;

- recommend H&S processes, procedures and arrangements
- determine and direct risk assessment activity, and
- agree training requirements.

**Scope and Outputs.** The H&SSG will;

- be responsible for operational risk ownership corporate risk assessment
- conduct and maintain the corporate training needs analysis
- agree competency standards
- maintain managerial oversight and review safety performance across SSDC, including audits and major incidents
- oversee the work and input into the work plan of the H&S Working Group
- submit an annual report to the Audit Committee summarising the Council’s H&S position and work undertaken during the year

**Membership**

Director Strategy and Commissioning and Support Services	Chair
Environment Services Manager	Risk Owner <sup>1</sup>
Leisure and Recreation Manager	Risk Owner
Lead Specialist Property, Land and Development	Risk Owner
Lead Specialist People	Risk Owner
Locality Team Manager	
Lead Specialist Environmental Health	
Lead Specialist People, Performance and Change	
Lead Specialist Strategic Planning	
Strategy and Commissioning Specialist/Case Officers	Secretariat

**Quorum.** The H&SSG will be quorate with the chair or a nominated stand-in, 3 Risk owners and 2 others.

**Frequency of Meetings.** Routine meetings of the H&SSG will be every 12 weeks, with extraordinary meetings convened as required by the Chair.

**Reports to:**

- SLT
- Audit Committee

**Groups reporting to this committee:**

- Health and Safety Working Group

### 5.3 Health & Safety Working Group – Terms of Reference

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Health and Safety Working Group (H&SWG) is to support the development and assure delivery of SSDC’s H&S Policy at the operational level. The group will:

- Implement H&S processes, procedures and arrangements
- promote a positive H&S culture throughout SSDC
- consult and represent the SSDC workforce on H&S matters, cascade and communicate decisions

**Scope and Outputs:** The H&SWG will:

- review reports of accidents, incidents and near misses, the lessons learned from them and appropriate action
- identify training requirements for staff, schedule and request funding for training
- ensure that safe systems of work are reviewed and updated
- review the Health and Safety Policy (at least) annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose
- carry out specific projects as requested by the Health and Safety Steering Group (H&SSG) and also make requests of them
- Develop a work plan to be reported to the H&SSG quarterly and Audit Committee annually or as required. The plan to be realistic, achievable and focussed on delivering the organisations key priorities and strategies.

#### Membership

<b>Service Delivery People Manager</b>	Chair
<b>Unison representative</b>	H&S rep.
<b>GMD representative</b>	H&S rep.
<b>Service Delivery Specialist – Environmental health</b>	
<b>Service Delivery Team manager – Customer focused</b>	
<b>Service Delivery Specialist team manager</b>	
<b>Service Delivery Lead Specialist - vulnerable customers</b>	
<b>Support Services Specialist team manager</b>	
<b>Support Services case officer (insurance)</b>	
<b>Commercial Services Team leader - Environment services</b>	
<b>Commercial Services Operations manager – arts &amp; entertainment</b>	
<b>Commercial Services Specialist – asset management</b>	
<b>Strategy and Commissioning case officer (health &amp; safety)</b>	Co-ordinator
<b>Yeovil Crematorium manager</b>	
<b>Commercial Services case officer (environment services)</b>	
<b>Commercial Services YIC manager</b>	
<b>Commercial Services Countryside manager</b>	
<b>Commercial Services case officer (property)</b>	
<b>Service Delivery Specialist – Economic Development</b>	
<b>Service Delivery Specialist – Building control</b>	

**Quorum.** The H&SWG will be quorate with the chair or a nominated stand-in and:

- One trades union representative
- One from each of the 4 Directorates
- At least four others

**Frequency of Meetings.** Routine meetings of the H&SWG will be every 12 weeks, with extraordinary meetings convened as required by the Chair.

**Reports to:**

- Health and Safety Steering Group

### 5.4 Key Performance Indicators 2021 - 2022

Category	Measure	Description	Reason	Source	Target	Reporting frequency
Safety provision	Accidents: to staff, where injury has occurred	Amount of accidents reported. RIDDOR reportable Type Service area Location	Legal requirement to record type and report RIDDOR  Analysis will help establish root cause and follow up preventative action.  Reduction in insurance claims	TEN system exports and analysis spreadsheet/ H&S database	% Reduction in accidents from previous year with aspiration of nil.	Qtly, in line with WG meetings  Monthly data analysis
	Near miss	Amount reported Type Service area Location	Analysis will help establish root cause and follow up preventative action.	TEN system exports and analysis spreadsheet/ H&S database	Comparison with previous years Increase in near miss should indicate reduction in accidents	Qtly, in line with WG meetings  Monthly data analysis
	Risk assessments (RAs) and safe systems of work (SSoW)	New RAs for new activities Existing RAs must be up to date  reminder by service area, date required	Legal requirement for up to date RAs and SSoW	TEN system/ H&S database  RA storage spreadsheet	Number of annual reviews completed compared with number of current/relevant RA held on system Rolling target based on review date due None outstanding	Annual number of outstanding risk assessments by date

Category	Measure	Description	Reason	Source	Target	Reporting frequency
Place of work	Inspections	Number of inspections carried out on plant, machinery and safety systems Service area follow up actions	Legal requirement	Service area records	None overdue <b>100% inspections complete</b>	Dependant on machinery and service area
Information, instruction and training	Training courses completed	Practical and e-learning courses completed in a year. Number of staff to complete them.	Legal requirements such as: New starter basic training Number of qualified First aiders and Fire Marshalls required for size of organisation Training required by service areas - working at height etc	Training matrix Skills Audit LMS	All staff to undertake Learning Management System (LMS) training Specific appropriate training undertaken in line with legal requirements depending on their role.	Annual
Welfare	Incidents/Violence, Terrorism and Security (VTS): An act of violence or aggression (Physical, verbal or threatened) or incident that has left a member of staff feeling uneasy	Amount reported Service area Location	Analysis will help establish root cause and follow up preventative action.	TEN system exports and analysis spreadsheet/ H&S database	% Reduction from previous year.	Qtly, in line with WG meetings  Monthly data analysis

Category	Measure	Description	Reason	Source	Target	Reporting frequency
Community	Accidents to public: where injury has occurred	Amount of accidents reported. RIDDOR reportable Type Service area Location	Analysis will help establish root cause and follow up preventative action.  Reduction in insurance claims	TEN system exports and analysis spreadsheet/ H&S database  Insurance claims	% Reduction from previous year with aspiration of nil. 3 year rolling average	Qtly, in line with WG meetings  Monthly data analysis