



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Document No:	Issue No: Issue 2	Issue Date: JUNE 2010 Review Date: APRIL 2011	Responsibility / owner: Corporate Health and Safety Team
Title: GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY			

CONTENTS

POLICY STATEMENT	2
1.0 Introduction	3
2.0 Organisation	4
3.0 Arrangements	10
4.0 Monitoring and auditing.....	12

Prepared by: Corporate Health and Safety Team	Approved for Issue by:
---	------------------------

REVISION TABLE

Issue Number	Date issued	Revision / change
2	June 2010	Amendments to policy following annual review

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

The Council recognises that providing good health & safety management is fundamental to the delivery of its services to the people of Cheshire East.

Our aim is to create an environment where everyone can work safely and healthily and where all those affected by our work remain safe. The Council accepts its responsibility to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

We will achieve this by:-

- *Identifying the risks in our activities and taking the necessary steps to manage those risks*
- *Complying with current health & safety legislation, guidance and best practice*
- *Ensuring through training and assessment that everyone has the necessary competence to do their job safely*
- *Communicating and engaging with employees to ensure that everyone understands how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy*
- *Ensuring that competent persons are available to provide health & safety assistance and technical advice*
- *Committing to a process of continuous improvement in our health & safety performance by monitoring results and forward planning*
- *Consulting with employees on all work related health & safety issues.*

The Council expects all staff to go about their work with the proper concern for the safety of themselves and others. It also expects the same support and cooperation from contractors, partners, visitors and persons using its facilities.



Erika Wenzel
Chief Executive

Dated 1st April, 2010

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Application

This is the written health & safety policy of Cheshire East Council as required by section 2 of the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

This policy applies to all employees, Elected Members, contractors, visitors, clients, service users, pupils and partner organisations insofar as the Council has control over their activities. Where agency workers and those on work experience or training schemes are engaged in the workplace, they will be treated as employees for the purposes of health and safety, the same level of care and protection afforded to them as other employees.

1.2 Commitment

The Council is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy place of work with adequate welfare arrangements. The Council will also ensure that all employees receive sufficient training and support in order for them to carry out their work with minimum risks to their health and safety and to the health and safety of others who may be affected by these work activities.

1.3 Health and Safety Management

The provisions contained within this policy will ensure that health and safety is an integral part of the corporate risk management process, and the health and safety management system contained within the HSE guidance note HS(G) 65 will be followed.

This policy outlines the Council's health and safety management system. Directorates and services may produce their own standards and procedures to demonstrate how health and safety will be managed including everyday operational issues.

In addition to the Health and Safety Policy, specific corporate policies will be introduced e.g. the accident reporting policy, which must be adopted by Directorates and Corporate services.

1.4 Consultation and Communication

Consultation and communication with trade unions and employee representatives will be maintained through the Corporate Health and Safety Forum and divisional / service sub-forums. The important role of Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives in the maintenance of high standards of health and safety within the organization is recognised and supported.

1.5 Joint Working

The Council will work together with partner organisations and other key stakeholders to ensure that health and safety is taken into account where joint working takes place. The Council will also ensure that there is proper liaison with external organisations such as the enforcement and inspection bodies.

Where contractors are used to carry out functions on behalf of the Council, they will be appropriately selected, vetted where necessary and subsequently monitored to ensure their work is in accordance with the Council's policy on health and safety.

1.6 Policy Approval

All policies relating to matters of health, safety and welfare will be presented to the Corporate Health and Safety Forum, Staffing Committee and other appropriate joint consultation bodies for approval. Such policies will then apply to all Directorates and Corporate services.

1.7 Review

The Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2.0 ORGANISATION

This section of the Health and Safety Policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders within the Council. It also outlines the Council's expectations of those who are not employees e.g. partner organisations, contractors, service users, visitors and members of the public, where these people have contact with the Council.

The health and safety functions of the persons involved can be generally categorised as ***Policy makers, Planners, Implementers, Assisters and Employees***

2.1 Policy Makers

Policy makers are those who devise and are responsible for approving and monitoring policy on health, safety and welfare at a strategic level. They preserve, develop, promote and maintain the Council's health & safety management system. *Policy makers* also make sure that health & safety matters are taken into account when organisational decisions are made.

The *Policy makers* are: -

2.1.1 Council Members

It is the responsibility of Council Members to approve and monitor the Council's Health and Safety policy and subsequent corporate policies.

The portfolio holder for Resources is the Council Member with specific responsibility for strategic health and safety matters and will also be briefed by the Head of HR and Organisational Development on operational matters of particular importance e.g. serious accidents.

The portfolio holder for Resources will ensure that Council Members receive an annual health and safety report.

Portfolio holders who have specific responsibility for Directorate and corporate services will also be responsible for monitoring relevant health and safety procedures.

Elected Members of the full Council must ensure that sufficient priority is given to the allocation of resources for the provision of health, safety and welfare. Members must ensure that health & safety is an integral part of the procurement process and that the Council ensures that the appropriate health & safety requirements are a significant factor in its procurement decisions.

2.1.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The Chief Executive will ensure that there is a suitable system in place for managing health and safety and that relevant Elected Members receive recommendations concerning sufficient resources being made available in terms of employees and finance. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to promote a positive health and safety culture within the organisation where health and safety is integrated into all aspects of work and employees are encouraged and supported when dealing with health and safety matters.

The Chief Executive will also ensure that the Management Team receive an annual health and safety report which reviews the main health and safety issues and sets priorities for the forthcoming year.

2.1.3 Directors

Directors and Service Heads for Performance & Capacity are responsible for ensuring that day-to-day health and safety matters are dealt with in their Directorate. This includes the following:

- Ensuring that there is compliance with the Health and Safety Policy and individual service policies
- Establishing and maintaining the Directorate Health and Safety Forums
- Integrating health and safety into Directorate Service Plans

- Liaising and consultation with Trade Unions on health and safety matters
- Implementing of Directorate policies
- Ensuring that employees are informed about Corporate and Departmental policies & understand their responsibilities for health & safety
- Ensuring that a Health & Safety Co-ordinator and Safety Assistants are appointed for their department

The Head of HR and Organisational Development is the named Director with specific responsibility for health and safety and as such has the following responsibilities in addition to those of Director listed above:

- Liaising with the Health and Safety Executive and other enforcing bodies
- Liaising with the Executive Member nominated as the Health & Safety Champion with regard to health and safety matters
- Presenting policies and reports to the Executive and joint consultation body.
- Liaising with the Corporate Health and Safety Manager on corporate health & safety issues
- Ensuring that each Directorate / Corporate service has access to sufficient health and safety advice
- Managing the implementation of policies
- Consulting with the Trade Unions

2.2 Planners

Planners are those who develop detailed local plans to achieve corporate health & safety objectives. They contribute to the Council's health & safety management system by concerning themselves with management arrangements for the identification, elimination and control of hazards and risks within their area of responsibility. *Planners* in this sense are; -

2.2.1 Heads of Service

Heads of Service are responsible for health and safety matters in the areas under their control including:

- Ensuring that there is sufficient health and safety training for their employees and maintenance of training records
- Liaising with the Departmental Health and Safety Forum and chairing the group if required
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as necessary
- Monitoring health and safety systems and procedures and setting targets to improve health & safety performance as part of the business planning process.

- Liaising with the health & safety co-ordinator within that department

It should also be noted that “*planners*” could also include Head Teachers, Designers and Health & Safety groups and Committees.

Schools such as Voluntary Aided Church Schools, Foundation schools and Academy Trusts are not owned and managed by the Council. It is recommended that such schools adopt this or a similar policy in respect of their responsibilities in accordance with Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974.

2.3 Implementers

Implementers are those within the organisation who make sure that the workplace precautions, risk assessments and safe systems of work are developed in order to control the hazards and risks within their area of responsibility.

Implementers include **Line managers, Supervisors, Premises managers, Teachers, and Contract supervising officers**

2.3.1 Line managers and supervisors including heads of departments in schools

Line managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that:

- Service and Corporate H&S policies and procedures are implemented.
- Employees receive information, instruction and training relevant to their role.
- Health and safety inspections are carried out at least every 6 months.
- Accidents and incidents are investigated and reported in accordance with the Council’s accident reporting procedure.
- Risk assessments are carried out for all significant hazards.

2.3.2 Managers in control of buildings and their deputies inc. headteachers

Managers in control of buildings and their deputies are responsible for **managing** and co-ordinating health and safety issues for the building including:

- Control of asbestos
- Management of Legionella
- Fire risk assessment and procedures
- Control of contractors
- Emergency and contingency planning

Building Managers will liaise with *Facilities Management Service* to make sure that maintenance and repairs are undertaken at the required intervals.

The 'Building Manager' will also ensure that records are kept and employees informed of the control measures necessary to minimise the risks to health and safety of the building users.

2.3.3 Contract Supervising Officers are responsible for ensuring that contracts are only awarded to contractors who can demonstrate their competence in health & safety as it applies to the work concerned and their willingness to put all necessary health & safety members in place.

2.4 Assistors

Assistors are persons that have the authority, independence and competence to advise Directors, Management and employees (or their representatives). They will be the following-

2.4.1 Corporate Health and Safety Manager

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager is responsible for the following:

- Liaising with the Head of HR & Organisation Development on health and safety issues
- Devising health and safety policies and procedures for consideration by Council Members
- Providing health and safety advice to Council Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, senior managers and other employees
- Monitoring the Health and Safety Policy
- Ensuring that training needs are identified

2.4.2 Corporate Health and Safety Advisers

Corporate Health and Safety Advisers have the following responsibilities:

- Providing health and safety advice to Directors, senior managers and other employees on all matters relating to health safety and welfare
- Advising on and monitoring Departmental health and safety procedures for consideration at Health and Safety committees and other consultation meetings

Assistors may also be technical or specialist employees who have achieved a certain level of health & safety competency within their specialized field.

2.5 Employees

Irrespective of their position within the structure all employees have the following responsibilities:

- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and other people
- To co-operate with the employer regarding matters of health and safety
- To report any matters which could put themselves or others at serious risk to their line manager
- To bring to the attention of their line manager, any defects in property, equipment or machinery which could give rise to harm
- Not to interfere with or misuse any equipment provided for health, safety or welfare
- To report accidents / incidents

2.6 Agency workers

For the purposes of the Council Health and Safety Policy, agency workers shall be regarded as employees of the Council.

Therefore all references to 'employees' in this policy shall include agency workers.

2.7 Trainees

Under the Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990, trainees, work experience students and others on similar training programmes with the Council shall be deemed to be 'employees' of the Council.

2.8 Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives

Safety Representatives have the same responsibilities as other employees. However, in addition to these responsibilities they also have rights under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and under agreed arrangements with the Council including:

- Carrying out health and safety inspections
- Assisting with accident investigations
- Receiving information from the employer regarding matters of health and safety
- Being involved in the consultation process on health and safety policies and procedures

3.0 ARRANGEMENTS

It should be noted that what follows here is a summary of the arrangements necessary for health & safety management. More detailed Corporate arrangements and guidance notes are included in the full policy.

3.1 Risk Assessment

The Health and Safety Policy of the Council is based on an effective health and safety management system, which aims to minimise risks to employees and others. Where significant risks are present, they will be subject to a formal risk assessment, which will determine the control measures to be used.

Risk assessments can be generic for a particular activity or individual to cover a specific situation. Where significant risks are identified, the results of the risk assessments will be recorded in either a risk assessment format, code of practice, policy document or guidance note.

3.2 Access to Competent Health and Safety Advice

In accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Council has a number of health and safety practitioners who are able to offer advice on all aspects of health and safety including advice on the completion of risk assessments.

Their roles and responsibilities are outlined in paragraphs 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 of this policy.

3.3 Training and Information

Health and safety training and information will be provided to employees in the following ways:

- During induction training
- By attendance at formal training courses covering general health and safety
- By attendance at training courses covering job specific topics e.g. manual handling
- By publications such as policy documents, manuals, leaflets, and pocket cards
- By use of Intranet health and safety pages

Health and safety training needs will be identified by managers in Departments and services during employees appraisals/supervision sessions and managers must ensure that appropriate training is delivered.

3.4 Consultation and Communication

The Council is committed to the principle of consultation and communication with employees on all matters of health, safety and welfare.

Each Division/Service must follow the format of the Corporate Health and Safety Forum which is chaired by the Director of HR/OD, and implement similar Service Health and Safety Sub-Forums chaired by the Directors of the Service (or their Nominee). These Divisional/Service Health & Safety Sub-forums sit below the Corporate Health and Safety Forums. The Sub-Forums must be made up of balanced numbers of Union representatives and representatives of management.

3.5 Accident reporting

The Council has an accident /incident reporting and recording procedure which applies to all departments.

Accident/Incident report forms are completed by managers and forwarded to the Health and Safety Team. Where accidents are reportable to the HSE under the RIDDOR Regulations they will be reported by the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

3.6 Occupational Health

The Council is committed to the prevention of occupational ill health and will take steps to ensure that all incidents of reported occupational ill-health are recorded. The Council will strive to ensure an improvement in these figures each year in the interests of employees' good health.

3.7 Contractors

All contractors will be required to act in accordance with the Council Health and Safety Policy and the policies and procedures of the Department for whom they are working.

Contractors are expected to carry out their own risk assessments to ensure the health and safety of Cheshire East Council employees and third parties who may be affected by the contractor's activities.

Where possible, the health and safety policies and procedures of partner organisations will work in conjunction with those of the Council.

Cheshire East Council will be working together with other agencies to improve the standards of health and safety performance of its contractors and all contractors will be expected to cooperate with the Councils vetting scheme when it is developed.

3.8 Partner Organisations

The Council will ensure as far as possible, that the health and safety policies and procedures of partner organisations are harmonised with those of the Council to reduce the risk of conflicting standards.

4.0 MONITORING AND AUDITING OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Council recognises the importance of regular monitoring of the health and safety policy and annual auditing.

The policy is therefore monitored by the following means:

- Council and Departmental Health and Safety Forums
- Site surveys
- Risk Management meetings
- Sickness absence data
- Annual employees survey
- Accident / incident data
- Annual health and safety reports
- Consultation meetings with the Trade Unions and their Safety Representatives

The Council will ensure that such monitoring is sufficient to ensure policies and procedures are effective and meet the requirements of HS (G) 65 'Effective Health and Safety Management'

4.1 Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed as a result of:

- Changes in safe working practices
- Up-dated knowledge of hazards
- Changes in Council structures
- Accidents or occupational ill-health issues
- Enforcing authority action

Notwithstanding the above, the policy will be reviewed at least annually.

All additional Policies and Guidance Notes relating to specific health and safety issues are available on the CEntranet under the Health and Safety Team home page.

<http://centranet.ourcheshire.cccusers.com/healthandsafety/Pages/default.aspx>

END OF DOCUMENT