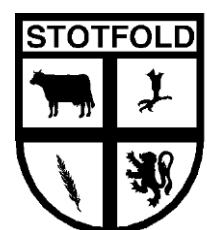


Health, Safety & Welfare Policy

Stotfold Town Council

Adopted February 2016
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Town Clerk



Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

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1. Introduction

Stotfold Town Council has adopted a Health and Safety Policy to protect all employees, visitors, contractors and users of its facilities.

This document details the Policy and the systems that have been set up within the organisation to ensure compliance and safe working practices.

Please read this document carefully and make sure you understand it. If you want to discuss safety matters generally, or have a particular problem, you should contact the Town Clerk.

2. Statement of Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

2.1 Declaration

The Members of Stotfold Town Council hereby give notice of their acceptance of responsibility as an employer to pursue a policy which ensures, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of all employees, contractors, visitors and users of premises, and others who may be affected by the Council's activities, and declare their intention to meet the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 and all other relevant statutory provisions.

2.2 Objectives

The Members of Stotfold Town Council's objectives in this respect are:

- i) provide and maintain workplaces which are without risk to the Health and Safety of any employee, contractor, visitor or user of the premises;
- ii) provide a working environment of a standard which will ensure the Health and Safety of its employees and other persons who are likely to be affected by the Council's activities;
- iii) assess the risks to the Health and Safety of employees and of anyone else who could be affected by its work activities, record the significant findings of such assessments and make them available to employees, contractors and users of premises;
- iv) provide, where appropriate, equipment, tools and plant which are safe and without undue risk to Health;
- v) institute procedures for the reporting of defective equipment or other hazardous conditions, and for the rectification of such defects;
- vi) make proper arrangements for the safe use, handling and storage of all articles and substances used by the Council;
- vii) promote the instruction and training of employees in matters of Health and Safety, so as to enable them to recognise and avoid hazards at work;
- viii) inform employees, contractors, visitors and users of premises of the risks associated with its work activities by means of notices and instructions, and to clearly describe the work methods necessary to minimise the likelihood of injury or of adverse effects on health;
- ix) provide and maintain, where appropriate, safety equipment and protective clothing and ensure that employees are informed of their obligation in respect of its use;
- x) provide First Aid equipment, facilities and training, and to make such other emergency provisions as are necessary to ensure the Health and Safety of all employees, visitors and others allowed access to the Council's premises;
- xi) institute a procedure for the recording of all accidents and instances of ill health occurring as a result of the Council's activities and ensure that such incidents are investigated;
- xii) provide satisfactory welfare and amenity facilities and make such arrangements as may be necessary to ensure the welfare of employees whilst at work;

- xiii) advise all employees, contractors and users of premises of their obligations in Health and Safety matters, and of the penalties for acting in such a way as to endanger the safety or health of themselves or others;
- xiv) ensure the proper direction and control of all persons other than employees allowed access to the Council's premises and also ensure they are not put at risk by the Council's work activities;
- xv) control the use of contractors on the Council's premises, and ensure that contractors work to safety rules at least of the same standard as those laid down through this policy;
- xvi) arrange for Health and Safety inspections of all premises and other areas at regular intervals with reporting of findings and recommendations to the Members of the Council;
- xvii) maintain arrangements with employees for joint consultation and participation in matters relating to their Health and Safety;
- xviii) keep the Health and Safety Policy under constant review and make improvements, additions and amendments which, from time to time, may be deemed necessary or desirable.

2.3 Responsibility for carrying out the Policy

The Town Clerk, on behalf of the Members of the Council has overall responsibility for:

- i) promoting the Council's policy for Health and Safety. Also, revising the Policy when appropriate and bringing it to the attention of all employees;
- ii) ensuring the circulation of information relevant to Health and Safety;
- iii) ensuring that all responsibilities for Health and Safety are properly assigned, accepted and fulfilled;
- iv) the keeping of central records containing accident and incident reports and such investigations as are relevant;
- v) planning for adequate staff, funds and materials to meet the requirements of the Policy;
- vi) evaluating the risk within the Council, ensuring that all liability is covered by insurance;
- vii) taking appropriate action on reports made with regard to Health and Safety and reviewing the overall performance of the Council;
- viii) ensuring that all members of staff are given the appropriate information, instruction and training to enable the activities of the Council to be carried out safely;
- ix) reporting to the nearest office of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) occurrences which fall within the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

3. Accident Reporting

3.1 When an accident/incident occurs, action must be taken. Injuries must receive prompt attention, and any immediate danger should be alleviated.

3.2 The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) and the Social Security Act 1975 require organisations to record accidents/incidents and also to investigate and report to the nearest office of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) accidents which result in the following:

- a) fatalities;
- b) specified major injuries (see RIDDOR leaflet);
- c) employees being absent from work for more than 3 days;
- d) reportable industrial diseases (see RIDDOR leaflet).

The Council is also required to investigate and report any dangerous occurrences (see RIDDOR leaflet).

4. Employees Responsibilities

- 4.1 All employees are to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of anyone else who may be affected by their work activities, and are required to co-operate with Stotfold Town Council in the fulfilment of its duties with regard to Health, Safety and Welfare at work.
- 4.2 Each employee, therefore, will be responsible for:
- a) making themselves familiar with and conforming to relevant Health and Safety instructions at all times;
 - b) not interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interest of Health, Safety and Welfare;
 - c) reporting to the Town Clerk incidents which have led to, or may lead to, injury or damage;
 - d) assisting as required in the investigation of accidents or incidents;
 - e) wearing the appropriate protective equipment where required.
- 4.3 It is the duty of all staff who have an accident/incident or witness an accident/incident to another employee, visitor or member of the public to ensure that everything possible is done to minimise damage, particularly injury to persons.

Therefore:

- a) obtain First Aid treatment for the injured person;
- b) ensure that the accident/incident is reported to the Town Clerk;
- c) record the accident/incident by filling in the Accident Book and completing a copy of the Council's Incident Report Form.

5. Employers Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Town Clerk is to:
- a) establish whether the circumstances or the result of the accident/incident are immediately reportable under RIDDOR as a major injury or as a dangerous occurrence;
 - b) investigate the accident/incident and ensure that all necessary steps have been taken to prevent any immediate further injury or damage to property;
 - c) ensure that an entry in the Accident Book has been made;
 - d) take what steps are necessary to remedy the cause of the accident/incident to prevent a reoccurrence;
 - e) ensure that if an injured employee is absent from work, or unable to carry out their normal work for more than 3 days (not including the day of the accident) Form F2508 is completed and sent to the nearest office of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) within 10 days of the accident.

First Aid

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 place a general duty on employers to make or ensure that there is made, adequate First Aid provision for their employees if they are injured or become ill at work.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has issued an Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) to accompany these Regulations.

The ACOP requires employers to assess hazards in the workplace and make appropriate provision based upon that assessment. In the working environment these First Aid provisions should take into account employees, visitors and users of premises.

A Council, in accordance with the requirements of the First Aid Approved Code of Practice, will need to provide suitable and sufficient First Aiders or appointed persons at all of its premises, ensuring that adequate First Aid cover is always maintained and available.

A First Aider is a person who holds a current First Aid Certificate approved by the HSE. The most familiar approved qualifications are those provided through courses organised by the Red Cross and St John's Ambulance Brigade.

An appointed person is someone authorised to take charge of the situation if there is an injury or illness (and generally would have received Emergency First Aid training).

The names of all such persons should be displayed at strategic points and also on or beside any First Aid Box.

First Aid Boxes

First Aid Boxes should contain a sufficient quantity of suitable First Aid materials and nothing else.

First Aid Boxes should be designed to protect the contents from damp and dust and should be clearly marked with a white cross on a green background.

First Aid Boxes which form part of an establishment's First Aid provision should only contain those items which First Aiders have been trained to use.

First Aiders and appointed persons are responsible for ensuring that First Aid Boxes contain the correct type and quantity of First Aid materials.

It must be emphasised that First Aid Boxes should NOT contain drugs of any kind including Aspirin or similar pain killers, and such medicines should NOT be issued by First Aiders to staff, or any other person treated, as there is a danger of adverse reaction in some cases. This extends to antiseptic creams or liquids, lotions, etc, which may aggravate injuries in some cases.

First Aid Boxes should be available in all locations and each First Aider should also be supplied with a suitable First Aid Box. Boxes are available in the Council Offices.

Fire Procedure & Instructions

In the event of fire, panic and the urge to get away are natural reactions. Information about the action to take, and the practice in that action, are essential to ensure the optimum response in the case of a fire.

Practice fire drills should take place at regular intervals in appropriate locations, they should be logged and the time taken to evacuate recorded.

Copies of notices giving simple guidance on what to do in the event of fire should be displayed in all workplaces and premises where persons could be at risk from fire.

All Members of staff must make sure they know the locations of the Fire Exits and firefighting equipment within the building. In an emergency the prime responsibility is for getting yourself and the persons under your immediate control out of the building.

As soon as the fire alarm has been sounded, a call must go out to the Fire Brigade either by the person raising the alarm, or by way of other persons given this duty.

Members of staff should be trained in the use of basic firefighting equipment e.g. fire extinguishers and hose reels.

The fire alarms are tested on a weekly basis.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

What is a substance hazardous to health?

Within your working environment, there are numerous substances which fall into the category 'Hazardous to Health', e.g. cleaning materials, weedkiller, solvents, fixatives, toner, 'tippex', etc. These products will be labelled as dangerous in several ways, i.e. very toxic, toxic, harmful, irritant or corrosive in line with the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging) Regulations 2002, and are labelled as such by an orange square with a black symbol in it, with one of the words listed above written underneath.

What does COSHH require?

- Assess the risk to health arising from work and what precautions are needed
- Introduce appropriate measures to prevent or control the risk
- Ensure that control measures are used and that equipment is properly maintained and procedures observed
- Inform, instruct and train employees about the risks and the precautions to be taken

Assessment

You need to know what the risk is and the extent of the risk, before deciding what, if anything you need to do about it.

The assessment must be a systematic review:

- What substances are present and in what form?
- What harmful effects are possible?
- Where and how are the substances actually used?
- What harmful substances are given off as a by-product of use?
- Who could be affected, to what extent and for how long?
- Under what circumstances?
- How likely is it that exposure will happen?

Hazard data sheets

All relevant information on substances used at work must be obtained from suppliers. This information, along with your assessment findings, should be formulated onto a hazard data sheet, clearly showing the safe system of use and all the necessary protective measures to ensure safe use of the substance. This data must be made available to all employees likely to use or come into contact with the substance. The RIDDOR '95 guidance is, L73, A Guide to Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, ISBN 07176 2431 5.

Electricity at Work

The Electricity at Work Regulations came into force in 1989, and laid down broad guidelines about safety of electrical systems and electrical equipment.

The Regulations apply to and are enforceable in respect of all places of work where electricity is used.

The main duty of employers is to ensure that the systems for distribution of electricity are constructed and maintained so as to prevent danger.

Within most working environments, large numbers of portable electrical equipment are in use at any given time, e.g. PCs, printers, photocopiers, kettles, drills, heaters, power tools, extension leads and kitchen equipment, etc. All of these will be plugged into the fixed installation electrical system.

Fixed electrical installations

When a system is first installed, the electrical supply authority require a 'Certificate of Compliance' before it can be connected to the mains supply. This is a Certificate issued by a qualified electrician, stating that certain tests have been carried out, and that the system is in a fit state to be connected.

A copy of this Certificate should be available for all of the buildings which the Council uses.

After this initial Certification the fixed wiring should need comparatively little attention. Re-testing at least every 5 years should be sufficient unless any assessments show otherwise. Copies of the Re-Test Certificate should be attached to the electrical equipment register/inventory.

Portable electrical equipment

When an appliance is purchased, it will have been tested to ascertain that it is suitable for the purpose for which it was made, as indicated by the BSI 'Kite' or BEAB Approved Mark on the equipment. So long as the equipment is to be used for the job it was designed, initially very little needs to be done.

A register of portable electrical appliances (all items with a plug) is kept. All existing and any new equipment should be individually marked with an identification number and entered into the register. All such equipment should be regularly checked by a competent person and a record of such checks should be kept.

Electrical equipment which has not been checked and recorded should **under no circumstances** be connected to the Council's electrical supply circuitry. Similarly, contractors, performing artists, etc should provide for inspection up to date documentary proof of the electrical integrity of their electrical equipment. Staff should be instructed that their own personal electrical equipment should not be connected to the Council's electrical supply without the equipment having been tested and recorded as it would have been had it been the Council's property.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 2002

These regulations provide a general framework of Regulations and Codes of Practice for the management of Health and Safety at Work which are wide-ranging and overlap with many pieces of existing legislation.

Because of that broad range, it is difficult to summarise, but aspects covered include:

- Risk assessments;
- Health & Safety Arrangements;
- Health Surveillance;
- Health & Safety Assistance;
- Procedures for Serious and Imminent Danger;
- Information for Employees;
- Co-operation and Co-ordination;
- Persons working for others, and self-employed persons;
- Capabilities and training;
- Temporary workers.

The Town Clerk will need to:

- i) ensure that the appropriate risk assessments are carried out and recorded where necessary;
- ii) implement, monitor and review preventative and protective measures;
- iii) ensure that emergency procedures are in place and are formally recorded;
- iv) ensure that the appropriate information, instruction and training is provided.

All employees have a duty to:

- i) take reasonable care for their own and others Health and Safety;
- ii) use all work items in accordance with training and advice;
- iii) co-operate with their employer with regard to Health and Safety matters;
- iv) report accidents and dangerous incidents;
- v) notify the employer of any shortcomings in Health and Safety arrangements.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

These regulations apply to almost all workplaces.

The Town Clerk will need to ensure that:

- Workplaces and work equipment are maintained and cleaned;
- Workplaces are suitably and sufficiently ventilated and lit, and a reasonable temperature maintained;
- Employees have sufficient workspace and workstations are suitable for them;
- Floors, staircases and escalators are safe;
- Persons are protected against falls (or falling objects);
- Windows and doors are safe (safety glass where necessary) and safe to open (and clean);
- Pedestrians are protected from vehicles;
- Suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences and washing facilities (including showers where required) are provided;
- Wholesome drinking water is provided;
- Accommodation for outdoor clothing is provided (including changing rooms where necessary);
- Suitable facilities are provided for staff to rest, especially for any person at work who is a pregnant woman, nursing mother or non-smoker.

All employees have a duty to:

- Act in such a way as not to jeopardise their own, other employees or any other person's Health, Safety or Welfare.
- They should also report any defaults immediately to the appropriate officers.

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

These Regulations deal with the Health and Safety requirements when working with Display Screen Equipment (DSE). They are intended to protect staff who habitually use DSE as a significant part of their work. They are concerned not only with the effect that display screens may have on their eyesight, but also the prevention of muscle and joint problems due to poor job and workplace design, and the physical and mental stress caused by prolonged continuous use.

This may mean, if the workstation assessment finds it necessary, the provision of new chairs, footstools, document holders, etc or the revision of work patterns and assurance that any new DSE equipment is suitable.

The Town Clerk will need to make arrangements to:

- Assess workstations and reduce risks to Health and Safety;
- Ensure that workstations meet minimum requirements;
- Plan work to ensure breaks or changes of activity occur during prolonged use;
- Arrange for eye tests if required by staff who qualify and if necessary provide corrective glasses needed specifically and solely for use with DSE;
- Provide information and training for DSE users.

All employees have a duty to:

- Inform their employer of any medical condition that may affect, or be affected by, their use of DSE;
- Ensure that workstations and DSE are suitably adjusted so as to minimise Health and Safety risks.

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 require employers to identify and assess the risks to Health and Safety present in the workplace, so enabling the most appropriate means of reducing those risks to an acceptable level to be determined. There is in effect a hierarchy of control measures, and PPE should always be regarded as the 'last resort' to protect against risks; engineering controls and safe systems of work should always be considered first.

However, in some circumstances PPE will still be needed to control the risk adequately, and these Regulations will then take effect.

The Town Clerk will need to:

- Assess the need for PPE;
- Select the most suitable PPE;
- Provide, maintain and store PPE correctly, and replace it as necessary;
- Ensure that information, instruction and training is given;
- Ensure proper use and the reporting or loss or defect of PPE.

All employees have a duty to:

- Ensure that they use, maintain and store PPE in accordance with any instructions or training which they have received.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

The Regulations apply to any means of transporting or supporting a load (including the lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force.

The term 'load' includes any person or animal.

They require a process of:

- a) avoiding the need to lift and carry wherever possible;
- b) assessing those operations which are unavoidable before lifting;
- c) reducing the risk of injury.

There are no specific requirements such as weight limits, but an informal assessment will indicate which activities will need a more thorough assessment to be undertaken.

Ways of reducing risk could include:

- i) improving environment;
- ii) providing information on safe lifting techniques;
- iii) considering individual capabilities;
- iv) using mechanical aids.

The Town Clerk needs to:

- a) identify all staff who are involved in Manual Handling Operations;
- b) carry out an informal assessment to identify all those activities which involve a potential risk and therefore require formal assessment.

Most everyday manual handling operations will not involve risk and therefore will require no further assessment unless there is a significant change in the operation.

All employees have a duty to:

- a) make use of all appropriate equipment provided for them, in accordance with the training and instructions which their employer may have given them. Such equipment will include machinery and other aids provided for the safe handling of loads.
- b) follow appropriate safe systems of work laid down by their employer for the handling of loads

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

Work equipment means any machinery, appliance, apparatus or tool and any assembly of components which, in order to achieve a common end, are arranged and controlled so that they function as a whole, e.g. lawn mower, portable drill, hand saw, soldering iron, hammer, socket set and computer.

The Town Clerk must ensure that:

- work equipment is suitable;
- equipment is maintained in an efficient state of good repair;
- suitable information, instruction and training is provided in respect of the safe use of work equipment;
- suitable and adequate guarding of all dangerous parts of machinery, and that these are maintained in efficient working order and good repair;
- work equipment is provided with, where appropriate, starting and stopping controls and emergency stop controls;
- controls on equipment that are easily identified as to what each control does and on which equipment it has effect;
- capability of isolating the equipment from its source of energy;
- stability of work equipment;
- adequate lighting is provided at any place where a person uses work equipment;
- marking of warnings on work equipment are clearly visible and unambiguous, easily perceived and easily understood.

All employees have a duty to:

- use correctly all work items provided by their employer in accordance with the training and instructions they receive to enable them to use the items safely;
- not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for their Health, Safety and Welfare.