

# **Health and Safety Policy & Risk Assessments**

**2015**

## **Devizes Town Council**

### **Health and Safety Policy**

This policy document is the central health and safety policy for all responsibilities, premises and activities of Devizes Town Council.

In accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974* it is divided into:

- Policy Statement - what we will do.
- Organisation & responsibilities - who will do it.
- Arrangements - how we will do it.

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#### **1. Policy Statement**

1.1. Devizes Town Council places the greatest importance on the health, safety and welfare of its employees and all others, including contractors, subcontractors, employees of others in the course of their work and users of Council facilities, who may be affected by its undertakings. The Council will seek to provide the healthiest and safest working conditions possible by requiring the involvement of all members and employees in this effort.

1.2. The Council is fully committed to meeting its responsibilities under the *Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974* and *The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (and as amended)*.

To achieve this it has appointed designated members of staff to be responsible for key components of the health and safety management system; to keep risk assessments and welfare procedures under constant review; to liaise with the Health and Safety Executive or other enforcing authorities where necessary and to keep the Council abreast of new EU directives, legislation, regulations, standards and guidance to ensure continued compliance and best practice.

1.3. The Council assesses all significant hazards and put in place arrangements to control these hazards. It monitors its health and safety performance regularly to enable remedial action to redress deficiencies and ensure continuous improvement.

1.4. The Council's policy will accord with the principles of the Health and Safety Executives' guidance: *Successful health and safety management (HSG65)*. The policy will be periodically (at least annually) checked against the H&S policies of comparable organisations.

1.5. The organisation for carrying out this policy and the provision of sufficient resources will be provided within the Council's established processes. Each individual must exercise responsibility at a level equal to any of their other functions to ensure the policy is put into practice.

1.6. This policy will be reviewed annually or if required by any significant changes to the Council's activities and approved by the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.

1.7. Devizes Town Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- safe plant and systems of work;
- safe use, handling, storage and transport of chemicals and work equipment;
- the provision of all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision;
- safe access and egress to all places of work under the Council's control;
- a safe working environment with appropriate welfare facilities including first aid provision;
- consult staff on health and safety arrangements and
- make regular risk assessments available to all employees.

1.8. Council employees will, as a condition of their employment:

- take reasonable care for themselves and others;
- co-operate and follow training and instructions;
- not interfere with or misuse anything provided for safety and
- report shortcomings in safety arrangements and immediately report serious danger.

1.9. As a condition of employment, all staff must remember that a health & safety breach is a disciplinary offence.

## **2. Organisation and responsibilities**

2.1 Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Town Clerk.

2.2 Duty for ensuring that this policy is implemented on a day-to-day basis is delegated to:

- Deputy Town Clerk.
- Senior managers and supervisors.

### **3. Health and safety risks arising from our work activities.**

3.1. Those that create a risk have the responsibility for ensuring that it is properly managed. Therefore, responsibility for producing suitable risk assessments lies with line managers, supervisors or any other person who organises work for others under their control.

3.2. Staff tasked with conducting a risk assessment shall be assisted, where necessary by the Deputy Town Clerk.

3.3. The action required to remove/control risks shall be agreed with the relevant senior manager.

3.4. The senior manager/supervisor will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented.

3.5. The Deputy Town Clerk shall monitor accident reports to check that the implemented actions are effective.

### **4. Consultation**

4.1. Risk assessments and policies are reviewed annually through relevant Council committees.

4.2. Measures or changes which substantially affect health and safety, compliance with changes to legislation or work relate illnesses or accidents will be reported on at the relevant committees or working parties through the year.

### **5. Safe plant and equipment**

5.1. Certain items of plant require statutory inspections on a frequency determined by relevant legislation. Inspections are organised with the Council's insurers and schedules are held by the Admin and Finance Manager.

5.2. Vehicles are managed by the Admin and Finance Manager.

5.3. A suitable risk assessment in items of plant/equipment must be carried out by the procurer of the item prior to it being commissioned. In most cases this is simply a brief report that identifies any hazards plus arrangements for training, restrictions on use by untrained staff, guards or safety features that should be in place and arrangements for rectifying faults. The assessment should also specify if pre-use checks are appropriate and these should be itemised where appropriate. If hazards are noted the risk assessment should be shared with relevant staff members.

5.4. Users of plant and equipment are responsible for carrying out any pre use checks.

5.5. Any problems found with plant/equipment should be reported to line managers.

## **6. Safe handling and use of substances**

6.1. No chemicals may be used until the supplier has provided a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS). A central file of these should be held at the Town Hall and a copy should always be made available to staff using the chemical.

6.2. The Health and Safety Officer will carry out periodic audits to ensure that assessments have been conducted as required.

6.3. The purchase of pesticides is a permitted exception to this policy.

6.4. COSHH training shall be carried out as required by the Health and Safety Officer. The HSE tool COSHH ESSENTIALS (<http://www.coshh-essentials.org.uk/>) is used at Devizes Town Council as the basis for identifying suitable management controls.

6.5. All users of hazardous chemicals shall be instructed in the safe storage, transport, handling and use of the chemicals. This instruction should be carried out by the line manager or, if requested to do so, by the Health and Safety Officer.

6.6. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that suitable Personal Protective clothing is provided for each person using the material and for replacing safety items as necessary.

## **7. Information, instruction and supervision**

7.1. The Health and Safety Law poster is displayed at on notice boards at each location owned or operated by the Council.

7.2. Health and safety advice is available from the Deputy Town Clerk.

7.3. The Deputy Town Clerk will maintain the Health and Safety document library and ensure that documents are available for each department . It will contain the current, applicable versions of legislation; regulations; standards; guidance and Council procedures.

7.4. Relevant Health and Safety Induction Training is arranged as quickly as practicable by senior managers.

7.5. All student placements and/or the supervision of volunteers must be formalised with senior managers and relevant health and safety training will be given.

## **8. Competency for tasks and training**

8.1. Induction training will be provided for all employees as soon as practicable but at least within six weeks of starting work with Devizes Town Council.

8.2. Individual training needs are identified through the recruitment process. Where the need for job specific training is identified, e.g. The Safe Use of Pesticides, staff shall be sent on appropriate externally provided courses.

8.3. Some in-house training is carried out by the relevant senior managers and supervisors.

8.4. Records of any health and safety training undertaken by Devizes Town Council employees should be placed on personal files.

### **9. Accidents, first aid and work related ill health**

9.1. Accident books complying with data protection regulations are kept in each Council location.

9.2. Details of accidents should be recorded as soon as possible in the accident book and then forwarded to the Health and Safety Office to be kept centrally in the Town Hall.

9.3. A summary of accident/incidents will be made available to the Personnel committee.

### **10. Emergency procedures – fire and evacuation**

10.1. Fire risks are managed by the deputy Town Clerk. Appropriate fire controls are identified through a fire risk assessment and implemented by the Direct Services Manager.

10.2. Escape routes are checked in accordance with the fire risk assessment.

10.3. Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked under a service contract by qualified engineers annually.

10.4. Alarms on Council owned or controlled premises will be tested regularly according to risk assessments and the *Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005*.

10.5. All staff are made aware of fire risks and evacuation procedures on induction.

### **11. Risk assessment**

11.1. A generic assessment of each location is maintained and updated by the Direct Services Manager with the Deputy Town Clerk.

11.2. Senior managers and supervisors must identify risks and carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. The risk assessment should identify significant hazards arising from work activity under their control. The assessment should identify all persons who could be harmed, including workers, members of the public, contractors and persons. Extra consideration should be made to identify vulnerable individuals or groups.

11.3. Any member of staff may who becomes aware of an uncontrolled or inadequately controlled risk should report their concerns to the line manager for an assessment to be carried out. The Deputy Town Clerk should also be informed.

### **12. Personal Protective Equipment**

12.1. Systems of work shall be selected which avoid the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) wherever reasonably practicable. PPE shall be regarded as the last resort to protect against risks to health and safety.

12.2. PPE shall be supplied free of charge to all employees. Supervisors are responsible for obtaining and paying for PPE required by their staff, to include any storage and maintenance required.

12.3. Supervisors must ensure:

- that the equipment is appropriate to the risks and working conditions.
- that it does not increase risks or place any unreasonable demands on the user's health and ability to work safely.
- it /adjusts fits properly.
- compatibility of different items of PPE used together.

12.4. Staff must be properly informed and trained in the use of PPE.

12.5. All PPE must be maintained and stored properly in accordance with suppliers' instructions.

12.6. Staff must follow instructions on when/how to use PPE if the need has been identified. It is not optional\*.

12.7. Staff must treat PPE supplied to them with care and report defects immediately.

\*Certain regulations specify optional use of PPE in limited circumstances (such as *Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005*) but these are exceptions.

### **13. Contractors**

13.1. The Council expects all contractors to meet, as a minimum, the standards of health, safety and welfare laid out in this policy.

13.2. The Council will employ only competent contractors who must supply on request copies of their:

- Health and Safety Policy;
- details of the organisation and arrangements for meeting the objectives of the policy;
- risk assessments;
- method statements;
- records of any health and safety incidents;
- evidence of public liability insurance.

If there is any doubt about the competence or commitment to health and safety of any particular contractor, the contractor will not be used.

13.3. Before starting work on any site, contractors and sub-contractors will be given clear guidance by their sponsors on the working arrangements to be followed, to include but not limited to:

- emergency procedures;
- accident reporting.

13.4. Relevant senior managers will monitor work conditions to ensure safety standards are being maintained and will check completed work.

13.5. If the conduct of a contractor or sub-contractor's employee endangers their own safety, or the safety of their fellow employees, council staff or visitors, that person may be refused permission to work on any further contracts or council premises.

13.6. Where appropriate, building work undertaken will meet the requirements of the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007*.

#### **14. Review**

14.1. The Council will review its policy at least annually.

14.2. The Council will review its policy in the event that it takes on new activities or where there is significant change to existing activities.

14.3. The Council will review its policy in the light of advances in the understanding and recognition of health and safety hazards, actively seeking information on which to base such reviews.

#### **13. Generic Risk Assessments**

13.1. Devizes Town Council reviews its operational risk assessment on an annual basis. These assessments cover the daily tasks undertaken by Town Council employees are intended to seek to mitigate the risk of injury to Staff, visitors, members of the public and contractors.

13.2. Whilst every care has been taken to review the processes for individual tasks, it is incumbent on all members staff and anyone reading the risk assessment to advise senior officers of any changes in environment and circumstances that may impact on the task which in turn may make it necessary to re review the risk assessment.

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