

Corporate Health and Safety Policy



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East Staffordshire Borough Council Health and Safety Policy Statement



As Chief Executive and Leader of the Council for East Staffordshire Borough Council we are committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe place of work for all our employees, as well as taking all reasonable steps to ensure that our public and our environment (which may be affected by the work of the Council) are exposed to the lowest practicable level of risk.

This Policy is based on the fundamental principles of Plan, Do, Check, Act from which we seek continual improvement and is fully supported by Members and the Corporate Management Team who have ultimate accountability for ensuring effective health and safety arrangements within the Council. However, health and safety is the responsibility of everyone and this Policy will be implemented by management and employees alike throughout the Council.

The Council's Health and Safety Objectives are to:

- **Comply** with health and safety Legislation, Codes of Practice, HSE Guidance Notes and other relevant standards.
- **Risk Profiling** to analyse and rank the risks the organisation faces and take action to control these risks.
- **Integrate** health and safety into service delivery, management and decision-making.
- **Consult and communicate** with employees, elected members, trade union representatives and other stakeholders to ensure they are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Strive for **continuous improvement** in health and safety standards, from lessons learnt in reviewing performance indicators.
- Recognise the different demands that the Council faces, but work as "One Council" to deliver a **consistent approach** to managing health and safety.

To achieve these objectives the Council will:

- Develop and maintain a documented and consistently applied **health and safety management system**.
- **Organise** to include clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines.
- So far as reasonably practicable, provide and maintain healthy and safe **work places, equipment and methods of working**.
- Provide sufficient **resources** to meet our commitment to health and safety.
- Appoint **competent** people to support us to meet our statutory duties.
- Provide all employees with suitable and sufficient **information, instruction, training and supervision** to work safely and avoid any actions that affect the health or safety of themselves or others.
- Work with all partners to develop awareness, **promote good standards** of health and safety and undertake **continuous monitoring** of our health and safety performance.

This Policy and accompanying arrangements will be reviewed regularly to take account of changing legislation, best practice and experience gained within the Council.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A O'Brien'.

Andy O'Brien (Chief Executive)

Dated: 8th March 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Fitzpatrick'.

Cllr M Fitzpatrick (Leader of the Council)

Dated: 27th July 2023

a Our responsibilities

Sensible and proportionate health and safety can be integrated into business performance, reducing injuries, ill health, protecting the environment and reducing losses and liabilities to financial resources. Safety Guidance Note SGN031 provides the framework to the health and safety management system of ESBC. The Council will take all reasonable steps to effectively maintain and improve how to manage health and safety risks by:

- providing a safe place of work, with safe entrances and exits at each workplace;
- providing a safe and healthy working environment;
- providing adequate support and facilities so health and safety representatives (appointed by trade unions) and other employee representatives can carry out their functions in line with the relevant law;
- providing safe plant, equipment and machinery;
- providing arrangements so items and substances at work can be used, handled, stored and transported safely;
- providing safe working procedures;
- providing appropriate welfare facilities;
- providing information, instruction and training, as necessary, at all levels (including temporary/agency workers, volunteers, other non-employees and contractors where necessary) to make sure they are competent, avoid ill health or injury at work, and increase awareness of employees' legal and moral obligations towards health and safety;
- Provide effective systems of communication that are maintained and monitored by the health and safety adviser to enable all employees meet their health and safety responsibilities.
- providing suitable and sufficient assessment of the health and safety risks to employees (while at work) and non-employees (arising out of our work activities) and establish proportionate control measures;
- making and delivering arrangements so we can plan, organise, control, monitor and review preventive and protective measures effectively;
- helping employees to contribute positively to their own safety at work and recognising that ill health and accidents may result from failings in management control and are not necessarily the fault of individual employees;
- providing adequate supervision of activities to make sure health and safety standards are met; and
- publishing each year the results of our health and safety performance.
- Provide specialist advice on health and safety matters as necessary.

b Health and safety management

East Staffordshire Borough Council's Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) is aligned to the Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle which is documented in SGN031.

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for health and safety throughout the Council for implementing and achieving the objectives of the health and safety policy statement. The Chief Executive will delegate the day-to-day health and safety management to the Heads of Service.

East Staffordshire Borough Council has appointed Mark Rizk, as Head of Service with responsibility for promoting health and safety within the organisation and will champion health and safety at the corporate management team level.

Councillors are responsible for applying health and safety Legislation. As a corporate body the Councillors have collective health and safety responsibilities; individually they should ensure that the corporate health and safety policy is applied effectively in the areas they have a particular responsibility for.

The corporate body must ensure that adequate resources are made available to implement successful health and safety management and to conform to all relevant health and safety statutes.

The Chief Executive, Councillors and Heads of Service will monitor the system to make sure that it continues to be effective and appropriate.

The main role of the Heads of Service is to:

- Support the Chief Executive in meeting his safety responsibilities for the council as a whole.
- make sure that health and safety is one of the most important considerations in developing policy and planning resources;
- monitor and review the effectiveness of health and safety strategies across the council;
- make sure that health and safety is properly integrated into business decisions when buying in services, employing contractors and evaluating the risk to the organisation and corporate management team.
- Support the efforts and roles of the representative of employee's safety group.

Line managers, team leaders and supervisors play an important role in managing and supervising health and safety and in maintaining and improving health and safety standards.

Without taking anything away from the main responsibility of managers and supervisors to make sure there are safe conditions at work, we will provide (through the Corporate Health and Safety Officer) competent technical advice on health and safety matters to help line managers in their task. Section 2 of this document shows how health and safety responsibilities are organised.

We will make sure that we provide occupational health facilities and identify and control work-related ill health. We will also make sure that we monitor the work environment to encourage co-operation, partnership and joint consultation with health and safety representatives who have been appointed by trade unions and other representatives of employee safety.

Effective communication of the health and safety policy is vitally important if it is to become more than words on paper. We will provide a summary of this document to all employees when they start work with us and make it available to existing employees through the corporate health and safety intranet site.

Health and safety will be a regular item on all team meetings – to make sure we all receive, and can discuss, information on any changes to the safety management system.

We will review this policy annually or sooner if there are substantial changes to legislation or the organisation and inform all employees about any changes.

Section 2: Organisation for health and safety

a. Individual responsibilities

All employees have a legal responsibility to meet the statutory requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. At all levels of the organisation, our people will be:

- Responsible for the safety and wellbeing of themselves, those people they manage and the people they work for;
- Aware of their responsibility for health and safety issues and their effects on people within the activities they control; and
- Aware of the influence that their action or inaction can have on the effectiveness of our safety guidance notes (see Implementation for a definition of SGN's).

The Head of Service nominated for health and safety is responsible for making sure that appropriate programmes meet relevant national legislation and the corporate standards.

The following people are responsible for health and safety.

- **Policy-makers**
They develop and are responsible for policy at a strategic level. They preserve, develop, promote and maintain our health and safety management system. Policy-makers also make sure that we take account of health and safety matters when we make organisational decisions.
- **Planners**
They develop detailed local arrangements and procedures to achieve our corporate aims. They also contribute to our health and safety management system, by dealing with management arrangements for identifying, eliminating and controlling hazards and risks within their area of concern.
- **Implementers**
They make sure that the workplace precautions and systems for controlling risk are in place and are put into practice.
- **Assisters**
They have the status and competence to advise management and employees (or their representatives). They will normally be the health and safety practitioners of the corporate health and safety team. Those who have achieved a certain level of health and safety competency, such as trade union safety representatives and those staff who have been nominated as representatives of employee safety for their service area, may also be considered as assisters.

Who	Who this includes
Policy-makers	Chief executive, Heads of Service, Councillors.
Planners	Service Area Managers, health and safety representatives.
Implementers	Team leaders, Lead Officers, Supervisors and employees
Assisters	Corporate Health and Safety Officer, trade union safety representatives and health and representatives of employee safety(RoES)

b. Health and safety policy-makers

Health and safety policy-makers will preserve, develop and maintain our health and safety management system by:

- identifying a structure for planning, measuring performance, reviewing performance, auditing and monitoring the health and safety management systems;
- developing strategies to put policy into practice and integrate into general business activities;
- making sure that responsibilities for safety, health and welfare are properly passed on, understood and carried out;
- agreeing plans for improvement and reviewing the progress of the health and safety management system and the corporate health and safety action plan;
- making sure we fully consider the resources we need across service areas for putting our health and safety management system into practice;
- making sure that there is consultation between safety representatives and management teams;
- making sure that our health and safety performance is audited and that we take appropriate action to put things right;
- monitoring how service areas' safety action plans are put into practice, to deliver the corporate plan;
- where a work activity presents a serious and imminent risk of injury, making sure that the work activity stops until the risk is removed or reduced to an acceptable level (whether or not that activity is carried out by our employees, contractors or others); and
- making sure that standards are clearly defined within a topic-based SGN's to make sure we act within the law and promote best health and safety practice.

c. Health and safety planners

Health and safety planners will contribute to our health and safety management system by dealing with local management arrangements for identifying, eliminating of or controlling hazards and risks within their area of responsibility. (Hazards are those things with the potential to cause harm. Risk is the likelihood of someone being harmed). They will do this by:

- carrying out safety tours to show their commitment to health and safety within their service area;
- making sure that health and safety responsibilities are properly passed on, understood and carried out by employees within their service area;
- telling the policy-makers what resources (including financial) are needed to meet their service area's obligations for health and safety matters, including providing equipment, clothing and training;

- setting up local management arrangements, risk-assessment programmes, risk-control systems, workplace precautions and associated performance standards, to make sure that they are monitored, reviewed and updated regularly and brought to the attention of employees;
- supporting the policy-makers in promoting our health and safety management system;
- asking for advice from the corporate health and safety officer to make sure we effectively plan and put into practice the SGN's, and making the corporate health and safety officer aware of deficiencies of health and safety matters;
- monitoring how effectively their service area's local arrangements are put into practice, making sure that it reflects the aims of this policy and the annual health and safety action plan;
- when making decisions on behalf of their service area, making sure that any relevant health, safety and welfare issues are dealt with fully;
- helping to set up health and safety committees to promote the involvement of trade unions, health and safety champions, employee representatives and managers in all aspects of health and safety.

d. Service Area Managers, Lead Officers, and Supervisors

All managers and supervisors are responsible for managing health and safety in their area of responsibility. Support is available from the Corporate Health and Safety Officer **(although Service Area Managers and Supervisors will be ultimately responsible)**. We will give individual managers authority to put identified action plans into practice within the general limits of their authority. In particular, they will:

- Communicate the Corporate Health and Safety Policy to all employees including agency/temporary or volunteers in your department under your control including new starters and every time the policy is review and issued.
- Undertake risk assessments identifying all known work related Hazards for their employees and record the findings on the Council's risk assessment software. The findings of the risk assessments should be used to identify control measures that reduce the risk to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable and communicate these to your team and anyone else who are affected by your work process.
- Give due care and consideration to Health and Safety Legislation, the Council Corporate Health and Safety Policy and other internal safety working guidance before committing the organisation to further potential risks arising from business decisions or work activities.
- Make sure that all employees under their control are familiar with the relevant risk assessments, SGN's, safe systems of work and put them into practice (they should discuss any areas of concern with the corporate health and safety officer).
- Ensure employees have adequate levels of competency to complete their work safely and where necessary provided appropriate health and safety training relevant to the hazards and competency needed for the departments work environment. Support safe

working were required with safe working procedures for employees to understand and follow the correct control measures identified in risk assessments.

- Managers must familiarise themselves with any statutory requirements as part of their roles and corporate health & safety policies or guidance.
- Set up and maintain within their department safe, healthy working conditions.
- Make sure there are safe systems of working, as set out in the SGN's and local arrangements.
- Show the commitment and motivation to achieve safe working attitudes and actions.
- Audit and monitor (through observation, direct supportive supervision and 'managing by walking about') safe working practices and procedures (this should be done every day).
- Make sure that procedures and training programmes are set up and maintained for all employees.
- Make sure that employees complete their assigned Health and Safety Induction training through e-learning within the first month of their employment.
- Make sure that job training is carried out by competent people.
- Make sure that procedures are included when designing, buying and using all new plant and equipment.
- Make sure that new, reviewed or changed processes and services will be assessed for risks (preferably before they are put into practice).
- Report ALL accident, incident and near misses via corporate forms. Investigate and follow up all accidents and incidents under the service area's control so that we can get rid of or control basic causes (this should help prevent them happening again).
- Managers must ensure that all accidents that are reportable under RIDDOR ([Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013](#)) are made known to the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and/or their Head of Service. Further guidance is available from SGN001 Accident and Incident reporting on the intranet.
- Set yearly aims within their area to improve health and safety, and review performance against these aims.
- Make sure that contractors' and other people's activities (for example, employees from other service areas) in the area or service are monitored to make sure they meet the relevant SGN's.
- Carry out safety inspections (including housekeeping) to identify hazards; and
- Make sure that all employees, including employee safety representatives, are able to carry out their responsibilities, and encourage them to work with managers to promote an attitude of safe working across the council.

e. Employees

Employees have an important role to play in effective health and safety management. Employees are crucial to maintaining and improving health and safety standards, so all employees will:

- Take reasonable care for their health and safety and that of other people who may be affected by what they do (or neglect to do) while at work;
- Co-operate with us to meet any health and safety legal duty or need;
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, misuse, or stop using equipment provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare (for example, protective clothing, first-aid equipment and machinery guards etc.);
- Have a particular duty to other people to protect their safety, and make sure that they don't use any method of work that could be dangerous to themselves, other employees or members of the public;
- Tell their line manager, without delay, about any work situation that might present a serious and imminent danger to themselves or others, or about any other problems in health and safety arrangements;
- Always follow relevant safe working procedures to avoid health and safety risks, and consult their line manager on any areas of concern;
- Make sure they have read and understood the risk assessment(s), SGN's or safe systems of work for the task they are performing and follow the guidance given and protective measures needed when working (such as clothing or equipment);
- Maintain tools and equipment in good condition and report any risk or problem to their line manager (employees must use equipment or materials for their proper purpose only);
- Follow all instructions (whether spoken or in writing) given to protect their safety and the safety of others;
- Be appropriately dressed for the particular working conditions and activities this may include all personal protection equipment;
- Behave appropriately at all times in the workplace;
- Report all accidents, near misses, incidents of violent aggressive or threatening behaviour, diseases and dangerous events (whether or not someone is injured), as well as unsafe conditions, methods of work, practices, tools, plant, premises or equipment, to their line manager or their safety representative or the corporate health and safety team, where appropriate;
- Help fully in the reporting and investigating any accident, near miss, dangerous event or incidents of violent, aggressive or threatening behaviour;

- Make suggestions to improve health and safety;
- Attend all training courses designed to further the needs of health and safety, as necessary;
- Complete all allocated units on the Health and Safety E-Learning system in a timely manner;
- Make sure they understand all relevant processes, materials and substances, and get advice from their line manager if they're not sure;
- Make themselves aware of the fire evacuation procedure for their premises and the position of fire exits, alarms and equipment, and make sure that escape routes and exits are not blocked;
- When working outside the direct control of their immediate supervisor, identify (and report to) the person controlling the site so you understand site safety rules or special requirements (for example, protective clothing); and
- Not take any action or get involved in any activity, while at work, that would harm the health and safety of any other employee, visitor or person working or living in the Borough.

All employees have a duty to co-operate at all times to help us meet these aims. We insist on safe working methods. Employees who ignore safety rules and procedures may face an investigation leading to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

f. The corporate health and safety officer

They have the necessary status and competence to advise management and employees, and will:

- Provide competent health and safety advice to CMT, Councillors, managers and employees as necessary.
- Assist managers in completing risk assessments for higher risk activities and assist managers to write safe working procedures.
- Promote our health and safety policy, the safe working procedures and the corporate health and safety action plan, set realistic standards and targets, decide on priorities and set up adequate corporate systems and performance standards.
- Review our performance by service area inspections and audit our health and safety management system.
- Help with, monitor and develop our health and safety policy by consulting managers and representatives of employee safety.
- Use executive powers (on behalf of policy-makers), which may include stopping work activities, where there is a serious and imminent risk of injury, and set appropriate health and safety standards to make sure we act within the law.

- Report as necessary to the cabinet of the Council or the Corporate Management Team (or both) on health and safety matters; and
- Co-operate with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other enforcement agencies as appropriate.

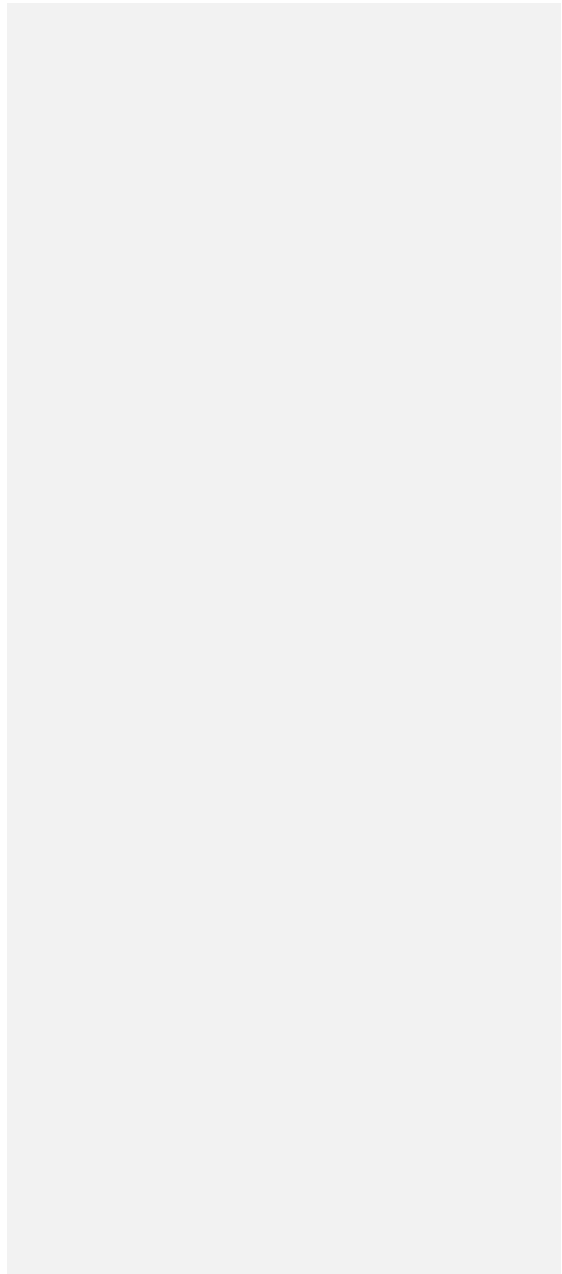
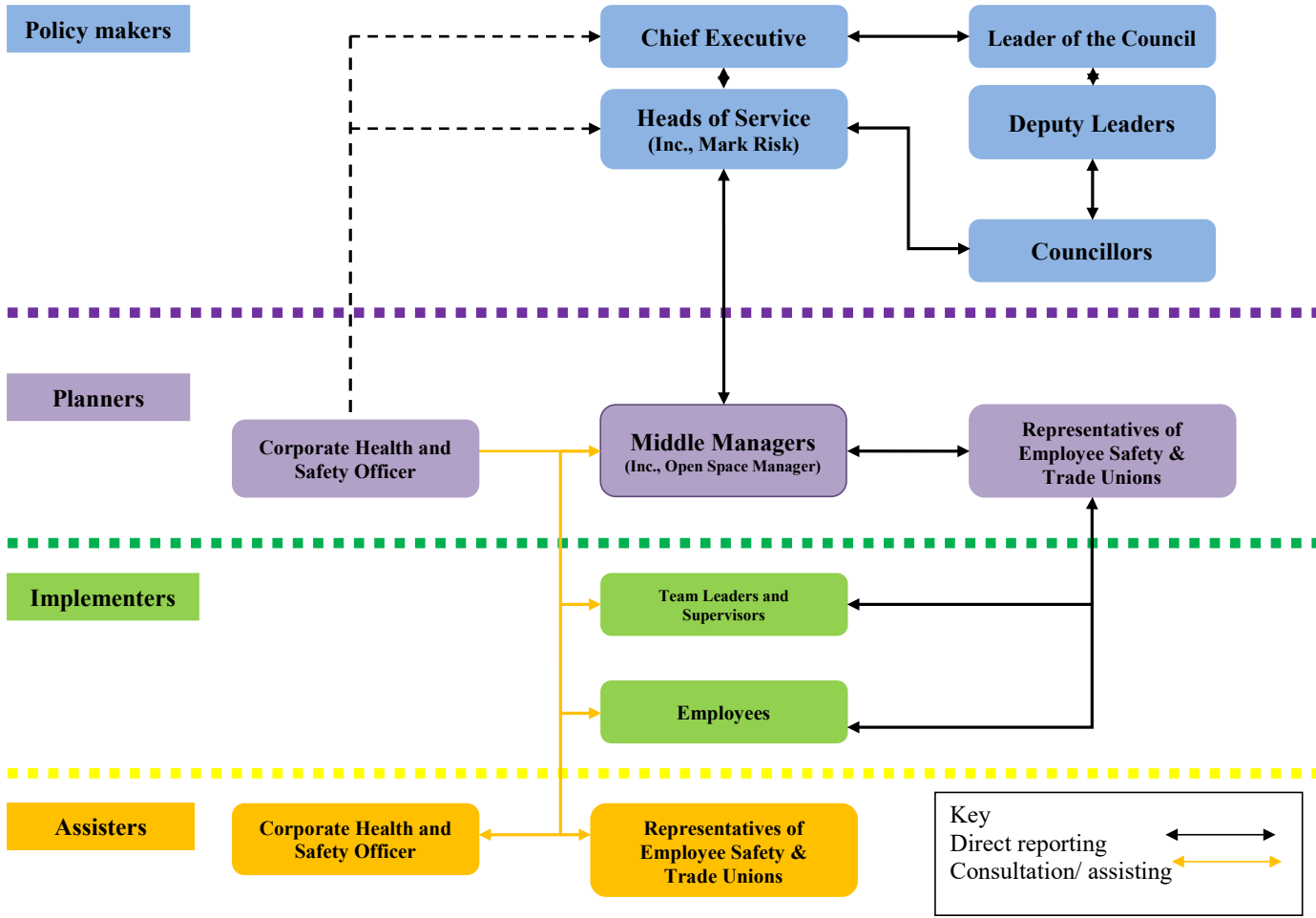
g. Representatives of Employees Safety Group

Together with Mark Rizk - Head of Service and the Corporate Health and Safety Officer, they will:

- The Representative of Employees Safety Group will meet every quarter by attending the Internal Communications Group meeting to discuss relevant health and safety topics for the organisation and consult on internal guidance and procedures that help the Council implement the legal safety standards.
-
- Promote a positive health and safety culture.
- Assist with the assessment of risks and proportionate control measures.
- Act as a focal point for health and safety issues that are relevant across all service areas.
- Advise on appropriate health and safety training for managers and supervisors or other employees, as necessary, to make sure we act within the law; and
- Work closely with the health and safety planners, and report to the policy-makers on matters concerning health and safety.

As part of our commitment to deliver effective communication to all our employees, we will give new employees a summary of this document when they begin working for us. If our health and safety policy changes, we will immediately tell all managers and employees through RoES group, employee staff briefing, staff notice boards, the managers' forum, employee briefing meetings, and internal intranet.

We will maintain a corporate health and safety intranet as a way of communicating corporate safety standards and as a document control system. You can find the health and safety pages from our intranet homepage by clicking on a link called 'Corporate Health and Safety'.



Implementation arrangements

The corporate Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) SGN031 sets the general framework for organising health and safety across the council and the policy are based on the Health and Safety Executives (HSE's) management model HSG65 Third Edition. To help us manage the health and safety risks and issues within the organisation, we have developed a series of topic-based safety guidance notes.

a. Legislation and Safety Guidance Notes (SGN's)

The council maintain a [legal register](#) which contains a directory of UK Health and Safety Legislation and how this is applicable to the business of the Council. This helps identify the Safety Guidance Note that are required as part of the health and safety management system.

The aim of SGN's is to define the minimum knowledge needed to meet legal and corporate standards. The SGN's will be written by the corporate health and safety officer in consultation with employees, representatives of employee safety, trade unions and other stakeholders. The SGN's will be authorised by the Chief Executive of the Council.

The main areas are:

- The definition of individual responsibilities and corporate standards;
- Standard documents and training throughout the organisation;
- Regular compliance audits; and
- A review of the system.

The safety guidance notes are based on the principle of getting rid of the hazard as the first step in controlling the risk. We give more detailed guidance on topic standards and relevant law in each safety guidance note. A full list of SGN's can be viewed on the health and safety intranet pages and found in the G-drive..

One of the main methods for making sure that each topic SGN is effective is the audit process. Audits allow us to review each topic SGN when they are due for revision and to make sure we continue to improve. The corporate health and safety officer(s) will prepare a schedule of audit dates each year.

Although the corporate health and safety officer is a competent safety practitioner, managers are responsible for all aspects of health and safety in their service area. Employees should first discuss health and safety topics with their line manager.

We maintain a library of SGN's, relevant legislation and other national standards. Staff can access this information by using our intranet site or contacting the corporate health and safety officer on Ext 1790. Using the health and safety intranet and the risk assessment system allows all health and safety documents to be located in one location. This format means we have version control documents within internal intranet, (documents become uncontrolled when they are printed).

At times, we may need specialist outside advice (for example, for controlling legionella (the bacteria that causes legionnaire's disease) or for specialist safety training). These specialists will be checked and approved by the corporate health and safety officer(s).

b. Local arrangements and procedures

Occasionally managers must develop local arrangements for delivering effective health and safety management, such as a local safe working procedure or method statement for a work activity. Local arrangements will detail the roles, responsibilities and authorities of local (named) individuals who will co-ordinate, manage and carry out some of the local procedures.

In all cases the local arrangements will 'translate' the Councils health and safety policy and SGN's into local, specific and deliverable instructions to make sure we meet the corporate standard. The health and safety officer are happy to advise management teams in developing local arrangements.

c. Training

Training needs can be identified and planned through the Councils workforce planning and appraisal scheme. Managers and implementers of the Health and Safety Policy will be provided with the competency and skills needed for their service area in this way.

Section 3: Measuring performance

As a way of measuring our performance and whether we meet our targets, we will measure the performance of the topic-based SGN's as follows.

'Proactive measures' of performance that monitor whether we are meeting targets, for example:

- Regular documented management audits;
- Managers annual self-audit
- Site inspections at set times;
- The results any SGN auditing activity;
- The number of areas within a service area with a known risk;
- The number of people exposed to a risk;
- New work projects assessed as having no relevant risk;
- The frequency of surveys and reports from the safety steering group;
- The frequency of, and attendance at, health and safety training;

- The frequency of, and attendance at, safety meetings; and
- The results of investigations by safety representatives.

We expect line managers to monitor whether we are meeting targets through direct supportive supervision and 'managing by walking about and observing'.

'Reactive measures' such as:

- Staff having to visit occupational health (that can reasonably be considered to be caused by exposure to the risk being measured);
- Investigating the details of civil claims against us; and
- The number of reports of near misses, incidences of illness or accidents.

We expect line managers to monitor whether we are meeting the safe working procedures by reviewing accident investigations and sharing findings, reviewing near-miss reports and monitoring areas and teams after incidents. Identifying the basic cause is essential for all safety management systems, as it highlights any problems and any improvement plans that we can put into practice.

Section 4: Reviewing Performance

a Auditing

We will regularly audit service areas' performance in individual topic-based SGN's. These reviews will be carried out by competent people who are as independent as possible from the service area being audited (and may be carried out by the corporate health and safety officer). Service areas can complete internal audits of themselves, these can then be provided for any external audits that are completed at a later date.

We will report audit findings promptly to all relevant employees, and make adjustments to safety action plans.

b Periodic status review

We will review the status of each SGN in accordance with the document review date (or more often in response to legislative changes). Formal SGN reviews will include:

- An overall reduction of risks;
- The overall performance of the SGN's;
- The performance of individual parts of the SGN's;
- The findings of the audit;
- Basic changes in organisational structure, new processes or new technology;
- External regulatory or guidance factors (for example, legislation or British Standards); and

- The results of an independent external audit, if there is one.

The design of this management system allows us to deal with and adapt to internal and external factors. The periodic status review gives us an opportunity to learn lessons and look forward. We use the information we gain to improve our approach to reduce risk as far as possible and improve business performance. We will use this review process to further develop suitable plans to reduce risks plans at each location within their safety action plans.

Help with this Policy

If this Policy is needed in any other language or format to help communicate effectively to any ESBC's employee's please contact the Corporate Health & Safety Officer.

We will make a copy of this corporate health and safety policy available to all employees through the health and safety intranet pages and a summary on the notice boards.