

Bromyard and Winslow Town Council



Health and Safety Handbook

December 2018

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This Health and Safety Handbook it is not an exhaustive list of all the hazards and risks that may be present in your workplace. It is the responsibility of your employer to review this handbook periodically and/or following a significant change to ensure it remains compliant with legislation.

Introduction

This Health and Safety Handbook contains health and safety information that will enable you to work effectively with your employer and contribute to a safe and healthy working environment. It provides an overview of the arrangements in place to manage risks in the workplace and the role you must play. Please read it carefully. Once you have done so you will be required to sign to confirm that it has been brought to your attention.

If you have any queries regarding the contents you must ask your line manager.

Legal Duties

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (“The Act”) is the primary piece of legislation and imposes duties on both employers and employees to ensure health and safety in the workplace.

Employer’s duties

Bromyard and Winslow Town Council (hereafter referred to as the council) has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. The employer must provide:

- a safe place of work without risks to health;
- safe means of access to and egress from the premises;
- safe equipment which is adequately maintained;
- systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary; and
- adequate facilities and arrangements for employees welfare at work.

Employers must also make sure that non-employees such as visitors, customers or contractors, are not exposed to risks to their health or safety.

In this handbook you will find the commitment your employer has made on health and safety and which is signed by the person with ultimate responsibility for health and safety in the council.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for other people who may be affected by what they do or omit to do. This is not just a matter of not doing anything that is reckless or silly but involves an understanding of workplace hazards and complying with safety rules and procedures so that they and others are not put at risk.

Employees must co-operate with their employer and:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and others affected by their actions;
- comply with the Health and Safety Policy, safety rules and written or verbal instructions;
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed;
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to the clerk;
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to the clerk;
- report all accidents to the clerk whether an injury is sustained or not;
- understand and comply with emergency procedures;
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation; and
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner and refrain from horseplay.

Safety Rules

Every employee must observe the following safety rules. Failure to do so will be considered to be a breach of the contract of employment and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

Employees **must**:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and that of any person affected by their actions or inactions;
- be aware of and adhere to the council's rules and procedures on health and safety;
- immediately report any unsafe working practices or conditions to the clerk;
- comply with all laid down emergency procedures and ensure all fire escape routes, fire equipment and fire doors are not obstructed;
- ensure passageways and work areas are kept clean and tidy and spillages are cleaned up immediately;
- make proper and safe use of all equipment and facilities provided;
- ensure all waste materials are disposed of carefully in the receptacles provided and in such a way that they do not constitute a hazard to others;
- wear suitable clothing, footwear and PPE where appropriate;
- report all injuries/incidents to their line manager and ensure that it is properly recorded in the accident book;
- report any medical condition which could affect the safety of themselves or others; and
- comply with all hazard/warning signs and notices displayed on the premises.

Employees **must not**:

- undertake a job which appears to be unsafe;
- undertake a job until they have received adequate safety instruction and they are authorised to carry out the task;
- misuse any fire fighting equipment provided;
- interfere with any protective guards and other safety devices; and
- drive or operate vehicles in connection with work whilst suffering from a medical condition or illness that may affect their driving or operating ability.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

Rules Covering Gross Misconduct

An employee will be liable to summary dismissal if they are found to have acted in any of the following ways:

- a serious or wilful breach of Safety Rules;
- wilful damage to, misuse of, or interference with any item provided in the interests of health and safety or welfare at work;
- horseplay or practical jokes which could cause accidents; and
- deliberately disobeying an authorised instruction.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Bromyard and Winslow Town Council (hereafter referred to as the council) recognises that it has a legal duty of care towards protecting the health and safety of its employees and others who may be affected by our activities. As part of that commitment we will:

- maintain our buildings/open spaces in a safe condition and provide adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work;
- provide a safe means of access to and egress from our buildings/open spaces;
- identify and adequately control health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- provide and maintain equipment and systems of work that are safe;
- make arrangements for ensuring health and safety in connection with the use, handling, and storage of articles and substances;
- ensure our buildings are clean and tidy and measures are taken to control the spread of infection;
- ensure all contractors who undertake significant work in our buildings/open spaces adhere to safe systems of work and engage competent staff;
- safely and responsibly dispose of all waste generated through our activities;
- provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of our employees and other persons;
- consult with employees regarding health and safety matters; and
- undertake continual monitoring and review of our performance to improve standards further.

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed at least annually and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the council's activities and any changes to legislation. Any changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of all employees.

Name: Karen Mitchell

Signed:

Position: Town Clerk

Dated:

Arrangements

This section describes the arrangements in place to implement the health and safety policy.

Accident, Incident and Ill-Health Recording, Reporting and Investigation

All accidents resulting in personal injury must be recorded in the council's Accident Book, which is located in the *council office*.



Incidents and work related ill-health must be reported directly to the clerk whereupon they will be investigated. Should you require first aid treatment, please contact your nominated first aider/appointed person whose details are provided below on first aid posters.

Asbestos

The council will protect employees and other persons potentially exposed to asbestos as far as is reasonably practicable. Everyone who needs to know about the presence of asbestos will be alerted. No one will be allowed to start any work that could disturb asbestos unless the correct procedures are to be employed.



If you notice any material that causes you concern, or you become aware of any damage to asbestos material, you must report it immediately to the clerk. Please be aware of any asbestos materials which are labelled as shown.

Communication and Consultation

Your employer will consult with its employees on Health & Safety matters through a variety of means including:

- individual conversations
- notice boards
- internal publications
- staff meetings
- Health and Safety meetings.



The council will also display the 'Health and Safety Law – What You Need To Know' poster in a prominent position or communicate similar information by other means.

Contractors

The council will ensure that all contractors working on its premises adhere to the contents of the H&S Policy and fire safety procedures. Contractors must ensure that all equipment, materials and premises under their control are safe and without risks to health. If you judge there is a risk where contractors are working you should inform your manager immediately. Before undertaking work all contractors must report to the clerk



Disabled Persons

All disabled employees and visitors will be treated with respect and dignity, both in the provision of a safe working environment and in equal access to the council's facilities. The council will ensure that risk assessments are undertaken of the special needs of the disabled persons and carry out reasonable adjustments to the premises and/or employment arrangements.

Display Screen Equipment

If you operate Display Screen Equipment your employer will carry out an assessment of your workstation and implement necessary measures to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment.

Some practical tips you can take include:

- adjust your chair and VDU to find the most comfortable position;
- make sure you have enough work space including under your desk;
- try different arrangements of keyboard, screen, mouse and documents;
- arrange your desk and VDU to avoid glare, or bright reflections;
- adjust your keyboard and try to keep your wrists straight when keying;
- adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen; and
- take regular breaks.



Driving

If you drive in connection with work (excluding the commute from home to your regular workplace) you are responsible for your safety and others who travel with you and must comply with the Highway Code and the Road Traffic Act. Further details are available from your employer. You must inform the clerk of anything that could affect your driving e.g. health conditions or injuries, use of prescribed medication or changes to your licence such as limitations, offences recorded, period bans. If you are involved in any accidents/incidents whilst driving on behalf of the council you must inform them immediately.



Electricity

When operating electrical equipment you must:

- visually check electrical equipment for damage before use and report defects;
- report any defects found to their line manager/supervisor;
- not carry out any repair to any electrical item unless qualified to do so;
- switch off non-essential equipment from the mains when left unattended for long periods;
- not bring any electrical item onto the premises until it has been tested; and
- not leave electric cables in such a position that they will cause a tripping hazard or be subject to mechanical damage.



If you discover something which is defective and presents a risk you report it to the clerk.

Fire

Fire is a significant risk in the workplace and we must all take our fire safety duties seriously. The council will carry out a Fire Risk Assessment that will detail the preventative measures in place to stop a fire happening and what to do in the event of an emergency. In the event of fire, the safety of life will override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.



Your employer does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire but extinguishing action may be taken if it is safe to do so. Immediate evacuation of the building must take place as soon as the

evacuate signal is given and all occupants, on evacuation, should report to the pre-determined assembly points.

Re-entry of the building is strictly prohibited until the fire brigade officer, or a senior person present, declares it is safe to do so.

If you discover something which is defective and presents a risk you report it to the clerk so that appropriate remedial action may be taken.

First Aid

The council will make sufficient provision for first aid to deal with accidents and injuries that arise at work. Nominated personnel will be trained to administer first aid.

An adequately stocked first aid box containing supplies will be held on site. The location of the first aid box is in the council offices.



Portable first aid kits will be available for staff members required to work away from the normal workplace, where access to facilities may be restricted.

Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure all exposure of employees to substances hazardous to health is prevented or adequately controlled.



The council will carry out risk assessments and give sufficient information and training to ensure full understanding of the hazards to health posed by substances in the workplace and the importance of the control measures provided. Information will also be given to others who may be affected such as contractors, temporary staff and visitors where appropriate.

Employees should **not** use any hazardous substance unless they have received the information and training for the safe use of that substance. Appropriate PPE must be worn where stipulated.

Ill Health

Employees who have a medical condition that may prevent them undertaking a task should notify their the clerk beforehand.

Legionella

The council will carry out a Legionella Risk Assessment that will detail the preventative measures in place to prevent Legionnaires Disease in council premises.

Lone Working

If you are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time the council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that you are protected from risks to your health and safety.



You will be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable you to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.

Manual Handling

To prevent injuries and long term ill-health from manual handling the clerk will ensure that operations which involve manual handling are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable.



Where it is not practical it will carry out an assessment to determine what control

measures are required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. This may include introducing mechanical aides and equipment, designing the workplace to take into account you activities. Where manual handling is necessary you will be trained accordingly. You must also familiarise yourself with the guidance on the principles of safe handling techniques.

New and Expectant Mothers

If you are a new or expectant mother there may be occasions when, due to your condition, different and/or additional risk control measures will be necessary. Should you become pregnant or are returning to work after having a baby, then you are requested to notify the clerk at the earliest possible opportunity so an individual risk assessment can be carried out.



Personal Protective Equipment

You will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by other means. When it is provided, it is because health and safety hazards have been identified that require the use of PPE to further reduce the risks. You must:

- wear the PPE as instructed or where indicated by signage;
- maintain it in good condition;
- report any defects to your supervisor/manager; and
- ensure the PPE fits correctly, is comfortable and fully adjusted.

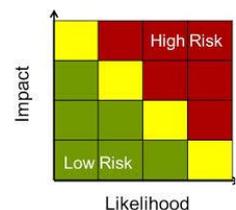


PPE is available from the clerk.

Risk Assessment

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify things that have the potential to cause harm (hazards) and assess how likely it is that they will harm you. Suitable control measures can then be put in place to protect you. Hazards will all fall under one of the following categories in your workplace:

- **Physical** (e.g. slip, trips and falls, machinery, fire, electricity, cuts, burns and scalds etc)
- **Chemical** (e.g. exposure to hazardous substances, disinfectants, paints, dusts etc.)
- **Biological** (e.g. Bacteria and viruses transmitted in body fluids or contaminated surfaces)
- **Psychological** (e.g. workplace violence, abusive customers, lone working, stress, shift work).



Your employer will carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments and bring the results to your attention. General risk assessment of all known and reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards covering all our premises, equipment and activities are available from the clerk.

Specific risk assessments will also be carried out as determined by the general assessment and are available from the clerk.

In the first instance, risks will be tackled at source using engineering means in preference to systems of work. Personal protective equipment is only an acceptable alternative where risks cannot be controlled by such other means.

Slips, Trips and Falls

The most common cause of injury in the workplace is slips, trips and falls. Hazards include trailing cables, boxes, materials and spillages. You must remain attentive to any slip or trip hazards on the premises and maintain good housekeeping standards at all times. Make sure passageways are free from trip hazards and never obstruct a fire exit. If a spillage occurs you must ensure it is attended to without delay.



Smoking

It is the policy of the council that all of its premises are smoke-free and that all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment. Smoking is prohibited throughout the entire workplace with no exceptions.



Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

Stress at work can come about for a variety of reasons. It may be excessive workload, unreasonable expectations, or overly-demanding work colleagues. As a reasonable council, we try to ensure that you are in a pleasant working environment and that you are as free from stress as possible.

Employees who experience unreasonable stress which they think may be caused by work should raise their concerns with the clerk or through the council’s grievance procedure. If deemed appropriate, the council will provide access to confidential counselling for employees affected by stress caused either by work or external factors

Training for Health and Safety

Training in health and safety is a legal requirement and also helps create competent employees at all levels within the council, which enables them make a far more effective contribution to health and safety, whether as individuals, teams or groups.



You will receive health and safety induction and refresher training which will cover general health and safety issues, emergency evacuation and assembly procedures and specific training in relation to particular duties at work.

Violence to Staff

The council recognises that in certain situations violent behaviour towards staff may occur and therefore will take all reasonable measures to protect staff from violence and aggression. Violence and aggression includes:



- actual or threatened physical assaults on staff
- psychological abuse of staff
- verbal abuse which includes shouting, swearing and gestures
- threats against employees.

If you are a witness or receive any violence or aggression towards you, then you should report this to the clerk so that this can be recorded and investigated. Where appropriate your employer will support the decision of any employee wishing to press charges against the individual(s) involved. Access to counselling can also be provided where required.

Visitors and Members of the Public

The council will ensure so as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of visitors to its premises. This includes ensuring that all areas where the public are present are safe and without foreseeable risk.



If you notice someone acting in a way which would endanger colleagues should notify their manager. If the danger is immediate, common sense must be used to give warning, call for assistance or give aid as necessary.

Waste Management

The council will look to minimise the production of waste. Any waste that must be disposed of will be done so in a legally compliant and responsible manner and will be safely stored, handled and disposed of through an authorised person.

Welfare facilities

Your employer will provide health, safety and welfare facilities including the provision of:

- appropriate ventilation, temperature control and lighting;
- suitable cleanliness and housekeeping standards;
- appropriate sanitary and washing facilities;
- separate toilet facilities for men and women;
- plentiful drinking water supply and cups;
- accommodation for keeping clothing clean and dry;
- facilities for changing, rest periods, hot drinks and meals preparation; and
- showering facilities if the nature of an employees work requires this.



Work Equipment

Your employer will ensure that all equipment provided for use at work is suitable for its intended use and maintained in a safe condition. You must only use work equipment for which you have received adequate information, instruction and training. Inspect equipment prior to use and report any defects to the clerk. Any defective work equipment must be taken out of use and reported to *the clerk*.



Workplace Transport

The council will take all reasonable steps to control the risks associated with moving vehicles on its premises. Vehicles and pedestrians will be effectively separated on traffic routes wherever possible and pedestrians will be prevented from entering areas where vehicles operate unless they are required to do so as part of their job role.



Signage will be provided wherever necessary to ensure that pedestrians are alert to the risks of moving vehicles in particular areas (i.e. delivery points).

Work At Height

Work at height is defined as work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. This includes working from steps, podiums and ladders. The council will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe working environment for all employees who may be affected by work at height activities and ensure that:

- Ladders should only be used for light, short duration work only and secured to prevent displacement.
- Employees should not use any ladders or other work equipment unless they have received the information and training for safe use.
- The council shall ensure that the risks of falling objects and materials are adequately controlled.

