

Bromyard and Winslow Town Council



Health and Safety Policy

December 2018

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This Health and Safety Policy it is not an exhaustive list of all the hazards and risks that may be present in your workplace. It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure this policy is reviewed periodically and/or following a significant change to ensure it remains compliant with legislation. The Policy should be read in conjunction with any separate policies and procedures provided for the health, safety and welfare of employees and those affected by your work activities.

Introduction

Bromyard and Winslow Town Council (hereafter referred to as the Council) is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees and those affected by its undertaking and it will, so far as is reasonably practicable, establish procedures and implement arrangements to comply with our statutory obligations.

This Health and Safety Policy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. It defines how we will manage the health and safety risks associated with our premises and activities and follows the principles of 'plan, do, check and act'. It will be signed and delivered by the most senior person within the Council.

The Council will implement a systematic and pro-active approach to health and safety management ensuring that foreseeable risks are assessed and control measures are communicated effectively to those affected. We will also measure our performance to ensure that continual improvement can be achieved and that employees, members of the public and others can benefit from the efforts made.

Policy Review

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually by the Council and the Ellis Whittam representative. Details of the review and/or amendment will be recorded below.

Date	Reason for review/amendment	Change made by

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:

Organisation and Responsibilities

This part of our policy describes how the Council is organised to manage health and safety and provides a clear understanding of individuals' areas of responsibility.

The Council

Overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the Council which shall:

- ensure a safe place of work and provide adequate resources to execute this policy; and
- ensure this policy is brought to the attention of all employees within its control.

The Council may delegate responsibility for the delivery of health and safety policy, but will remain accountable for the actions or inactions relating to this policy & contents therein.

The Clerk

The Clerk shall:

- ensure that all health and safety duties delegated to them by the Council are undertaken in line with this policy;
- ensure that the contents of this policy is brought to the attention of the persons under their control and that regular consultation with employees takes place;
- ensure all risks presented to employees and others are identified and appropriate risk controls are implemented and properly communicated;
- identify training needs commensurate with the risk identified and provide adequate training and supervision to ensure that all staff members are competent;
- carry out periodic health and safety inspections of our buildings and equipment to ensure that all necessary controls are in place and being adhered to;
- ensure that all contactors operating under their control are properly controlled and where necessary permits issued; and
- investigate, report (to the HSE where applicable) and record accidents and implement measures to ensure that corrective action is taken to prevent recurrence.

Employees

Every employee shall:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and that of any person affected by their actions or inactions;
- cooperate with their employer in all matters relating to health and safety;
- attend training sessions where required and adhere to all safe systems of work implemented by the Council;
- use equipment in accordance with the Council and the manufacturer's instructions;

- report all hazards and / or accidents to allow the Clerk to investigate and implement controls where required;
- ensure that PPE clothing & equipment is used as directed;
- ensure that all infection control procedures are followed; and
- report any unsafe conditions and defective equipment to the Clerk.

Fire Marshals

They shall:

- carry out fire safety preventative checks in areas under their control;
- coordinate the evacuation of the building in the event of an emergency situation.

All staff assuming these responsibilities will be given specific training on appointment and refresher training on a regular basis.

Appointed Persons

The Appointed Persons shall:

- take charge when someone falls ill or is injured, including calling an ambulance if required; and
- look after and maintain the first aid box and its contents.

Note: The Appointed Person will not be required to provide treatment for which they have not been trained.

Ellis Whittam

Ellis Whittam will provide advice and assistance on Health and Safety issues through a programme of site visits and telephone advisory service available 24 hours per day, 365 days of the year. Ellis Whittam will conduct an annual general risk assessment and produce an action plan together with recommended timeframes for completion. It is the responsibility of the Council to progress actions identified on the assessment.

Arrangements

This part of the policy describes the arrangements in place to provide a safe and healthy working environment.

Accident Investigation and Reporting

The Council requires employees to report all accidents / incidents / near misses as they occur, and will ensure that they are investigated to establish the causes and recommend any actions to rectify and prevent recurrence.

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to investigate all accidents including those involving members of the public, visiting personnel or contractors, and to share the findings of the investigation where necessary with enforcing authorities and insurers.

Asbestos

The Council will protect employees and other persons potentially exposed to asbestos as far as is reasonably practicable. Access to asbestos-containing materials in our buildings will be controlled so as to prevent inadvertent disturbance of the material and the release of asbestos fibres.

Our buildings will be surveyed to determine whether asbestos-containing materials (ACM's) are present. A written plan or register will be prepared that sets out the location of the asbestos-containing material and how the risk will be managed. The arrangements will be reviewed at regular intervals.

The register is held in the Council offices.

Any work on, or removal of, asbestos-containing materials will be controlled to ensure that adequate precautions are taken to prevent the release of asbestos fibres. Work on asbestos-containing materials will only be undertaken by a contractor licensed by the HSE unless the work is exempted.

Communication and Consultation

The Council will communicate and consult with employees on issues affecting their health and safety and take account of their views. Effective communication and consultation will be achieved through:

- individual conversations
- notice boards
- internal publications
- staff meetings.

Each building will display the 'Health and Safety Law – What You Need To Know' poster and/or communicate similar information by other means.

Contractors

All contractors working in our buildings/open spaces must comply with the contents of this Policy and fire safety procedures. Contractors must ensure that all equipment, materials and premises under their control are safe and without risks to health.

The Clerk has the authority to stop the work of contractors who are placing themselves, other staff, members of the public or visitors at risk. Any member of staff who judges there is a risk where contractors are working should inform the Clerk immediately.

Control of Premises & Welfare

The Council will ensure so far as is practicable and in line with any contractual agreements that may exist between landlord and tenant that our buildings are fit for purpose and pose no undue risk to the employees, members of the public and others who visit the building. This includes:

- safe access to and egress from the building including in emergency situations;
- maintaining a clean and hygienic workplace;
- ensuring adequate facility is provided for hot water washing and toilets;
- providing suitable facilities for rest periods and breaks;
- providing safe work equipment which is fit for purpose; and
- ensuring comfortable working temperatures and adequate ventilation.

The Council recognises that slips and trips in the workplace are a common cause of major injury and will ensure that good housekeeping standards are maintained at all times and that traffic routes and floors are safe and free from trip hazards. The Council expects all employees to take personal responsibility for their immediate work areas and not create hazards for themselves or others.

Disabled Persons

The Council will give full and proper consideration to the needs of disabled employees and visitors. The Council will treat all disabled employees and visitors with respect and dignity, both in the provision of a safe working environment and in equal access to the Council's facilities. Where it is necessary, reasonable adjustments to the building and/or employment arrangements will be made for disabled persons. In an emergency evacuation, ensure suitable plans will be implemented to enable disabled people to leave the premises safely.

Display Screen Equipment

All reasonable steps will be taken by the Council to secure the health and safety of employees who work with display screen equipment (DSE). The Council will:

- carry out an assessment of each user's workstation;
- implement necessary measures to remedy any risks; and
- provide adequate information and training to persons working with DSE and how risks to health are to be avoided.

The Council will arrange for free eye tests when requested and arrange for the supply of any corrective appliances (glasses or contact lenses) where these are required specifically for working with DSE.

Employees must comply with the instructions and training given regarding safe workstation set-up and use, the use of the equipment provided, and take regular breaks or changes of activity. Employees with a disability, health condition or who are suffering from discomfort which may affect their ability to work using DSE must inform the Clerk.

Electricity

All reasonable steps will be taken to secure the health and safety of employees who use electrical equipment. The Council will ensure:

- electrical installations and equipment are installed in accordance with the Wiring Regulations published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)
- fixed installations are in a safe condition and routinely tested; and
- all portable and transportable equipment is inspected and tested.

Employees must visually check electrical equipment for damage before use and report any defects found to the Clerk.

Employees must not carry out any repair to any electrical item unless qualified to do so or bring any electrical item into our buildings until it has been tested. Electric cables should be arranged in such a position that they do not cause a tripping hazard or be subject to damage.

Fire Safety

Fire is a significant risk in the workplace and we take our fire safety duties seriously. As such we have developed this policy and arrangements to ensure we protect people from the risks of fire and comply with our legal requirements under fire safety legislation. The Council will ensure that the provision of fire safety is adequate and meets the needs of not only the staff employed to work within the Council but also any member of the public, contractors or visitor present within the premises.

The Council will ensure:

- a Responsible Person is appointed and authorised to complete their duties in accordance with fire safety legislation;
- a current, suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment is produced by competent persons, made available and reviewed periodically;
- all employees receive training and instruction on all of the fire and emergency procedures including those with special responsibilities (Fire Marshals);
- a weekly test of the fire alarm is carried out and logged and that all employees are made aware of the testing regime;
- all electrical equipment is maintained and inspected;
- the alarm is serviced periodically by competent personnel, and that emergency lighting is tested periodically;
- a planned / unplanned fire evacuation drill is undertaken at intervals of no more than six months, and any issues noted during the evacuation are addressed;
- a weekly management check of fire routes, fire doors, fire extinguishers and general housekeeping is undertaken and logged and any defects actioned; and
- fire extinguishers are provided and serviced periodically and located as per the fire risk assessment.

A current, suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment will be produced by competent persons, made available and reviewed periodically. This process will be overseen by the Clerk.

All employees are also expected to co-operate fully with us in complying with any fire precaution procedures that we may introduce as a measure to protect the safety and wellbeing of our staff and visitors. All employees have a responsibility to make sure they are familiar with the layout of the building, noting where fire exits are and where they lead. They must also ensure the correct use of fire doors, that all fire exits and evacuation routes are clear at all times and that no flammable materials are stored in corridors or on stairs.

We will keep staff informed of any changes that are made to our fire safety procedures and the Fire Risk Assessment. We will also ensure that all visitors to our buildings are briefed on the evacuation procedure.

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 in their capacity as nominated persons as determined by the requirements of the relevant first aid regulations.

An adequately stocked first aid box containing at least the minimum supplies suggested by L74: First Aid at Work Approved Code of Practice will be held in our buildings and notices displayed will indicate its location and who can provide assistance.

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

Hazardous Substances

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to ensure that:

- all hazardous substances (COSHH) are identified and adequately controlled;
- appropriate PPE is available for staff where applicable;
- correct storage and segregation is provided; and
- good personal hygiene is practiced.

Information, Supervision and Training

All employees will be provided the necessary instruction, training and supervision in order to carry out their duties safely and without presenting a risk to themselves or any other person affected by their undertakings. Employees will receive health and safety training on induction and refresher training at intervals determined by the Council. Training will include but not be limited to:

- hazard spotting and risk control measures;
- fire safety awareness and emergency procedures;
- safe operation of equipment; and
- accident, incident and near miss reporting.

Job specific training will be provided as necessary. All training records will be retained by the Council.

Lone Working

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety.

The Council will determine, by risk assessment, those activities where work can actually be done safely by one unaccompanied person. In carrying out the risk assessment particular consideration will be given to:

- the remoteness or isolation of the work;
- suitable means of communication including in the event of an emergency;
- the possibility of interference, such as violence or assault from other persons; and
- the nature of injury or damage to health and anticipated "worst case" scenarios.

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

Manual Handling

Where practicable the need for manual handling will be eliminated. However when it is necessary the Clerk will assess the risk to all employees arising for any identified manual handling tasks and to:

- eliminate the task where possible
- reduce the load to be handled if elimination is not possible;
- provide apparatus and equipment to handle the load;
- provide adequate instruction and training.

New and Expectant Mothers

The Council recognises that the general precautions taken to protect the health and safety of the workforce as a whole may not in all cases protect new and expectant mothers and there may be occasions when, due to their condition, different and/or additional measures will be necessary. The Council will ensure that risk assessments are carried out for all work activities undertaken by new and expectant mothers and that associated records and documentation are maintained.

Occupational Driving

The Council recognises that some roles require driving on Council business. The Council is committed to reducing the risks its staff face or create when driving at work and will:

- ensure risk assessments are completed and that journeys are planned;
- not put unreasonable time constraints on travel;
- ensure those driving for Council business are competent, authorised and fit; and
- provide sufficient information and guidance for drivers on occupational risks involved in driving.

Drivers will remain responsible for their safety and must comply with the Highway Code and road traffic legislation. Drivers must hold a valid licence and valid insurance for business use and be physically fit and not suffering from any health conditions or injuries, or using medication that may affect their ability to drive safely. Drivers are responsible for maintaining their own vehicles. Any accidents/incidents occurring whilst driving on behalf of the Council must be reported to the Clerk.

Personal Protective Equipment

The Council will provide personal protective equipment (PPE) when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by other means. To effectively implement its arrangements for the use of PPE the Council will:

- ensure that PPE requirements are identified when carrying out risk assessments;
- provide adequate maintenance, cleaning and repair of PPE;
- instruct and train staff in the safe use and maintenance of PPE;
- make arrangements for replacing worn or defective PPE; and
- provide adequate accommodation for correct storage of PPE.

Employees provided with PPE for use at work are required to adhere to all instructions on its use.

PPE is available from the Town Clerk.

Risk Assessment

The Council understands that risk assessments are the foundation of an effective safety management system. The Council will carry out a general risk assessment and where necessary produce specific risk assessments that will be suitable and sufficient. A record of any significant findings will be made.

The risk assessment will be undertaken by the Town Clerk.

Risk assessors will work in conjunction with any other person that may offer expertise within that particular area to ensure that the risk assessments are suitable and sufficient and in line with relevant legislation. The risk assessment findings will be brought to the attention of all employees through the most effective means. When undertaking risk assessments the following hierarchy of risk control measures will apply:

- Eliminate the risk where possible
- Reduce the risk or substitute for a less hazardous alternative
- Isolate and/or segregate the hazard from the person
- Procedural arrangements including systems of work
- Personal protective equipment.

Managers shall ensure risk control measures are implemented. Risk assessments will be reviewed at regular intervals or whenever there is a change in circumstances that undermines the validity of the assessment.

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.

We will:

- work to identify all workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress
- regularly review risk assessments
- consult with Safety Representatives on issues relating to the prevention of work-related stress
- provide access to confidential counselling for employees affected by stress caused either by work or external factors
- provide training for all managers and supervisory staff in good management practices
- provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the company’s agreed stress management strategy.

Employees who experience unreasonable stress which they think may be caused by work should raise their concerns with their Manager.

Violence

Violence and aggression is defined as actual or threatened physical assaults on staff and psychological abuse such as shouting, swearing and gestures. The Council will not tolerate such behaviour and will:

- carry out risk assessments of potential conflict situations to determine the control measures necessary to protect employees;
- ensure that premises are kept secure including during periods of lone working;
- inform all employees of the procedure following a violent or challenging behaviour incident and support the employees involved in any incident;
- train employees who may be exposed to violence or challenging behaviour situations; and
- keep records of all incidents of violence and aggression and review the control measures.

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 the Council. This includes ensuring that all areas where the public are present are safe and without foreseeable risk.

Any employee who notices persons acting in a way which would endanger colleagues should notify their line 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 minimise the production of waste by applying the principles of the waste hierarchy through prevention (of the creation of waste), re-use, recycling, other recovery or ultimately disposal.

Any waste that must be disposed of will be done so in a legally compliant and responsible manner and will ensure that all waste, which is classed as controlled industrial waste, is safely stored, handled and disposed of through an authorised person.

Work At Height

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:

- the need to undertake work at height will be eliminated whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so;
- all work activities that involve work at height are identified and assessed and suitable work at height equipment is provided; and
- employees are trained and competent to carry out work at height activities safely.

Ladders should only be used for light, short duration work only and secured to prevent displacement.

The Council will also ensure that the risks of falling objects and materials are adequately controlled.

Work Equipment

The Council will ensure that all work equipment provided for use at work is:

- obtained from a reputable source;
- safe to use and fit for purpose;
- maintained and inspected as necessary; and
- stored securely and safeguarded from unauthorised access.

Employees will receive adequate information, instruction and training and must not use any work equipment without such. Any defective work equipment must be taken out of use and reported to the Town Clerk.

Workplace Transport

The Council will take all reasonable steps to control the risks associated with moving vehicles on its premises. Such measures will be derived from a workplace transport risk assessment. 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).

Monitoring and Review

Measurement is essential to maintain and improve our health and safety performance by identifying how effectively we are controlling risks and how well we are developing a positive health and safety culture.

There are two types of performance monitoring, active and reactive.

Proactive monitoring

Proactive monitoring is designed to identify and where necessary rectify risks before they cause harm. The Council will ensure that checks and inspections of the workplace are undertaken at suitable frequencies and a record made against relevant health and safety standards. Much of this checking will be informal and not recorded but formalised, structured checks will also be undertaken and recorded to demonstrate compliance with legal standards. The Council will encourage employees to participate in workplace inspections and take an active interest in health and safety monitoring.

A general risk assessment will be undertaken by our competent person each year which will support the Council's active monitoring arrangements.

Reactive monitoring

Reactive monitoring is triggered after an event including accidents, incidents, and cases of ill health or property damage. The Council will investigate all such incidents which provide an opportunity to check performance and learn from mistakes and improve control measures.

Investigations may also provide valuable information in the event of legal action or an employee claim.

Review

Following monitoring and reviewing health and safety performance and documentation, the Council will revise all procedures, assessments and documentation wherever necessary and bring these amendments to the attention of all employees.

It is the responsibility of the Council to ensure active and reactive monitoring arrangements are undertaken.

Council Safety Rules

It is incumbent on every employee to 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 their line manager
- comply with all laid down emergency procedures and ensure any fire escape route, fire equipment or fire doors are not obstructed
- ensure passageways and work areas are kept clean and tidy and that 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.

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;
- deliberately disobeying an authorised instruction.

This is not an exhaustive list.